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LX



THE OCTAGON.

THE
FLORENCE STORIES,
BY
JACOB ABBOTT.



NEW YORK:

SHELDON & COMPANY.

LX

THE

FLORENCE STORIES,

BY JACOB ABBOTT.

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FLORENCE AND JOHN.  
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NEW YORK:
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1866.

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THE FLORENCE STORIES.

- I.—FLORENCE AND JOHN.
- II.—GRIMKIE.
- III.—THE ORKNEY ISLANDS.
- IV.—THE ENGLISH CHANNEL.
- V.—THE ISLE OF WIGHT.
- VI.—FLORENCE'S RETURN.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—THE TWO LITTLE STUDIES,.....	11
II.—THE KEYS,.....	17
III.—AQUA,.....	22
IV.—REASONABLE RULES,.....	26
V.—THE LOST BALL,.....	33
VI.—FOUR PLANS,.....	38
VII.—THE SPELLING LESSON,.....	49
VIII.—HAND OVER HAND,.....	57
IX.—THE EXPERIMENT,.....	64
X.—THE LADDER,.....	71
XI.—WORKING SYSTEMATICALLY,.....	79
XII.—THE MOUNTAINEERS,.....	86
XIII.—ABOUT TESTS,.....	94
XIV.—THE SNOW CLOUDS,.....	100
XV.—THE FARM,.....	108
XVI.—BRIGHT ABOUT SOME THINGS,.....	117
XVII.—A CONVERSATION,.....	124
XVIII.—THE BALL RECOVERED,.....	131
XIX.—THE BALLOON,.....	139

CHAPTER	PAGE
XX.—THE STATE ROOMS,.....	146
XXI.—PLAN FOR A SCHOOL, ...	156
XXII.—THE SCHOOL A FAILURE,.....	164
XXIII.—TOTALLY DISCOURAGED,.....	174
XXIV.—A WILD SCHEME,.....	178
XXV.—THE VOYAGE,.....	182
XXVI.—LITTLE ALLAN,.....	192
XXVII.—WEST POINT,.....	199
XXVIII.—HISTORY OF A WORD,.....	207
XXIX.—THE COMPOSITIONS,.....	216
XXX.—LITTLE ALLAN AGAIN,.....	221
XXXI.—THE WINTER SHOP,.....	229
XXXII.—PURCHASES,.....	237
XXXIII.—THE ORANGE QUESTION,.....	245
XXXIV.—CONCLUSION,.....	251

ENGRAVINGS.

	Page
I.—THE OCTAGON ROOM,.....	Frontispiece.
II.—VIGNETTE TITLE,.....	3
III.—HAND OVER HAND,.....	61
IV.—THE MOUNTAINEERS,.....	91
V.—THE ASCENSION, ...	141
VI.—OUT IN A SQUALL,.....	187
VII.—SHOPPING,.....	243

FLORENCE AND JOHN.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO LITTLE STUDIES.

FLORENCE and JOHN lived in a house very pleasantly situated on the banks of the Hudson river, not very far from New York. The house that they lived in was not large, but it stood in a sheltered nook on the bank of the river, not far from the village, and in such a situation that from the front windows, and from a little piazza at one end, Florence and John could look out upon the water and see the steamboats and sloops go by every day.

The place was known by the name of the Octagon. The reason why it was called by this name was, that the principal sitting-room in the house was built in the form of an octagon, that is, instead of having only four sides, as a room usually has, this room had eight sides. An octagon is a figure of eight sides.

A figure of four sides is called a square. A figure of five sides is called a pentagon, of six sides a hexagon, of eight sides an octagon. There might be a figure of seven sides, but it would not be very easily made, and it would not be very pretty when it was made, and so it is seldom used or spoken of. But octagons and hexagons are very common, for they are easily made, and they are very regular and symmetrical in form.

If you wish to see exactly what the form of an octagon is, you can make one in this way. First cut out a piece of paper in the form of a square. This square will, of course, have four sides and four corners. Now, if you cut off the four corners, you will have four new sides, for at every place where you cut off a corner you will have a new side. These four new sides, together with the parts of the old sides that are left, will make eight sides, and so you will have an octagon.

If you wish your octagon to be regular, you must be careful how much you cut off at each corner. If you cut off too little, the new sides which you make will not be so long as what remains of the old ones. If you cut off too much, they will be longer. You had better cut off a little at first from each corner, all around, and then compare the new sides with what is left of the old ones. You can then cut off a little

more, and so on, until you make your octagon nearly regular.

There are other much more exact modes of making octagons than this, but I can not stop to describe them here.

The octagon room was not the front room of the house. It was rather a back room. The windows of it looked out upon a little lawn between the house and the road. This lawn, however, was nothing more than a little green yard with trees and shrubbery around it.

Thus the house was between the road and the river. On the river side, there was a steep bank covered with trees, almost too steep for any one to go down. At the bottom of this bank, along the margin of the water, was the Hudson River railroad. The cars were going to and fro along this road all day long, and almost all night, too. The front of the house was toward the river, and consequently, away from the main road leading to the village. There was, however, a small but very neat and pretty road, which entered through a gate under the trees, and winding along on the margin of the little lawn, came round to the front of the house, and passed close by the piazza which was built over the front door. Standing on this piazza, near the front door, you could see up and down the river a

great way. You could also hear the trains go by on the railroad below, though you could not see them from this place. There was a seat, however, on the bank, a little way down, where you could see them very distinctly whenever they went by—the locomotive at the head of the train always coming first into view, and puffing out great volumes of white vapor among the trees.

On the front door of the house was a silvered plate, that was always kept very bright, which had the name John Morelle upon it. This was the name of the father of Florence and John. Mr. Morelle was, however, seldom at home. He was a merchant and ship-owner, and he did a great deal of business beyond the seas, which required him to go away continually on long voyages. While he was absent in this way, the children were left at home with their mother.

Mr. Morelle was quite rich, but his wife preferred to live in a small house while her husband was away, because she did not wish to have much company. She wished to devote herself to her children. She loved her children very much, and there was no employment which she liked better than teaching and training them. She had learned how to teach and train them remarkably well,—as, in fact, all mothers very

soon do who love the work, and whose hearts are set on learning to do it right.

If now you look at the picture in the frontispiece, you will observe that the middle window of the octagon room opens down to the floor. The two side windows do not open down to the floor, but there is something curious in the space beneath them. Under each window there is a leaf like that of a table, with book-shelves and drawers below. When this leaf was up, it served for a table, and it was made of just the right height for Florence or John to sit at and write. Below it were two shelves for books, and lower still, nearer the floor, a drawer to hold slates, copy-books, pens, and other such things. This drawer was pretty deep, for it extended into the wall for some distance. The book-shelves were more shallow, being made only of a proper depth to receive books such as the children used.

When this leaf was up, it was kept up by two brackets, which moved on hinges, so that they could be shut in to let the leaf down, or opened out to hold the leaf up. When they were opened out, and the leaf was up, they came at the outer edges of it, so as to be out of the way of the knees of the children in sitting there to write. When they were shut in, they occupied the upper corners of the upper book-shelf,

leaving a space like an arch for the top of the upper shelf.

When the time came for the children to study, they would go each to their own window, and lift up these leaves, and open out the brackets to support them. Then they would open their drawers and take out their writing-books, and their inkstands, and their slates, and whatever else they required for that day's lessons. These they would keep upon the table formed by the leaf. Then, when their work was done, they would put their things all away again, and then put down the leaf and shut the drawer. The leaf covered the little bookcase entirely, being made to fit exactly into it at the edges all around, and then there were two panel doors, which, shutting in over the leaf, kept it in its place and concealed it from view. These doors were secured by a lock. Florence kept the key of her bookcase, and John kept the key of his.

The children called these places their little studies.

CHAPTER II.

THE KEYS.

THE children took a great deal of interest in the construction of their little studies while the joiner was making them, and their interest in them was very much increased by having the custody of the keys themselves. On the day when the studies were finished, it happened that a lady of Mrs. Morelle's acquaintance, from the village, came to pay her a visit, and Mrs. Morelle took her into the octagon room to see the new accommodations which had thus been provided. The lady was very much pleased with them.

"But, Katie," said the lady, "you are not going to allow the children to keep the keys themselves, are you?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle.

"That will never do, you may depend," said the lady. "They will certainly lose them."

"I expect they will lose them," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Then why do you let them have the keys?" said the lady.

"Because I wish them to acquire their experience in losing keys while they are young," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Oh ! Katie," exclaimed the lady, "what notions you have."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Morelle. "Nobody ever learns to take care of keys till they have experienced the inconvenience and trouble that comes from losing them, and I wish my children to learn this lesson while there is not much depending."

"Mother," said Florence, as soon as the lady visitor had gone, "what do you think I had better do with my key so as not to lose it ?"

"You can do with it whatever you please," said her mother. "You can carry it about with you in your pocket, or you can hang it up somewhere."

"Which do you think will be the best way, mother ?" said Florence.

"To hang it up somewhere will be safest for the key," replied Mrs. Morelle, "but to carry it in your pocket would be safest for what is locked up. You see if we hang up a key in some proper place, the key will not be in danger of being lost, but then some person may perhaps come and take it off from its hook, and go and unlock the place, and look at our things, or take them away. But

if we keep it in our pockets, then nobody can get it to unlock the place, but there is some danger that we may lose it. So it is safer for the *key* to keep it hung up, but it is safer for the *things locked up* to carry the key in our pockets."

"I do not think that there is anybody that would take my key and open my study," said Florence, "even if I were to leave it hanging up."

"Yes, Grimkie would," said John.

Grimkie was Florence's cousin.

"I'll ask him not to take it," said Florence.

"He wont care for that," said John. "I mean to carry my key in my pocket and so make sure of it."

"I think I had better have mine hung up," said Florence. "Besides, I do not always have a pocket."

So Florence asked her mother where would be a good place to keep her key, and her mother proposed that there should be a little brass hook screwed into the wood of the front of her drawer, on the inside.

"The key will be out of sight there," said she, "and yet the place will be very convenient for hanging it up whenever you lock up your study, and for getting it again when you wish to open your study."

"That will be an excellent plan," said John. "It will be a secret place where Grimkie can not find it."

"Yes," said Florence, "I'll keep it a secret—a very close secret. If Grimkie asks me where I keep my key, I will not tell him."

"That would be one way to manage it," said Mrs. Morelle. "And another way would be, for you to tell him all about it, and so trust to his honor."

Florence paused with a thoughtful expression upon her countenance, as if she was uncertain what to do.

"Sometimes," said Mrs. Morelle, "if we show suspicion and distrust of people, it makes them unfriendly, and they try the more to do what we are afraid they will do, when, if we had placed confidence in them, they would have been induced to try to show that they deserved it. For instance, in this case, you might ask Grimkie, the next time he comes here, if he would screw in a hook for you to hang your key upon, and thus let him see that you did not suspect that he was such a person as would take another's key and unlock their doors. Or you can have the hook put into your drawer in some other way, and so try to keep the secret from him where the key is hid."

"I think I had better tell him," said Florence. "And I will ask him to put in the hook for me ; I know he will be willing to do it."

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "In the meantime you can put the key in the drawer, and let it lie there until the next time that Grimkie comes here."

This arrangement was carried into effect. The children locked up their respective studies, and then Florence deposited her key in the drawer, while John put his in his pocket. This being done, they passed out together through the central window of the octagon—the one which opened down to the floor—and went to play ball on the lawn.

CHAPTER III.

AQUA.

Aqua is the Latin name for water. Thus aqueduct means a channel for conducting water, and the phrase *aqueous particles* means watery particles.

One day when Florence and John were sitting together upon the seat under the margin of the bank, where they used to go to see the trains go by, they got into a little dispute about water and steam. John was at work making the frame of a kite, while Florence was looking down the river toward the place among the trees on the bank where the trains usually came first into view, and was watching for the Albany express, that was due just about this time.

"Keep a close watch," said John, "and tell me the instant you see it coming."

"Yes," said Florence. "I am watching."

In a few minutes she exclaimed,

"Here they come! I see the steam!"

John looked up, and he saw the little puffs of



white vapor appearing here and there among the trees, as the locomotive shot swiftly along.

"Yes," said John, "they are coming, but that is not steam."

"What is it then? Is it smoke?" asked Florence.

"No," said John. "It is not smoke either."

"I think it is steam," said Florence.

"No," said John, "it is not steam. I know it is not."

"How do you know?" asked Florence.

"Grimkie told me it was not," said John.

"I do n't believe Grimkie knows," said Florence.

As there seemed to be nothing else to be said after the dispute had reached to this point, both the children were silent for a few moments. In the meantime the train came on apace, and soon went thundering by the station with tremendous and unabated speed. The station was only a way station, and the express trains did not stop at it.

As soon as the train had gone by, Florence, who, like other young ladies, did not like to be told by her brother that she was mistaken, brought up the question of the steam again, by saying that she was sure that what they saw through the trees was steam, because she had often heard people talk of steam from the loco-

motive, and besides, a locomotive itself was a steam engine. It went by steam, and what they saw through the trees was a part of the steam let loose that made it go.

After some further discussion of the subject, the children left the seat, and went up the bank till they came in sight of the house. Looking toward the house, they saw their mother sitting, with her work, on the piazza. The piazza was at the south side of the house, and there was a place upon it which was in shade in the afternoon, and Mrs. Morelle used to like to sit there and read or write, while the children were at play upon the grounds.

The children immediately ran towards the house, in order to refer their dispute to their mother.

"*Is* it steam, mother?" said John.

"*Is n't* it steam, mother?" said Florence.

"Ah! children," said Mrs. Morelle, "this is a dispute just like all the rest of the disputes that the world is filled with. When you grow up, and go out among people, and even before you grow up, you will find people wrangling and disputing everywhere, about every thing. And almost all the disputes are just like this of yours. Both of you are right, and both of you are wrong."



"Oh, mother," said John, "how can that be?"

"It is a difference in the meaning of a word," said Mrs. Morelle. "Steam has two meanings; that is to say, there are two things very different from each other, which are called steam. Now, what you see among the trees, when the locomotive goes by, is one of these things, and it is not the other. So in one sense Florence is right in saying that it is steam, and in another sense she is wrong. So John, in saying that it is not steam, is right in one sense, and wrong in another."

"Oh mother!" said Florence "what a parcel of senses! Explain it to us mother, please."

"I can not explain it to you in words very well," said Mrs. Morelle, "I must make an experiment."

The children were both much pleased to hear of an experiment. There was nothing, they said, that they should like so well.

"Come and make the experiment now," said they.

"No," said their mother, "I can not go now; but sometime within a day or two I will show you the experiment, and explain the whole subject to you as well as I can."

Why this chapter is headed by the word *aqua* will appear by and by.

CHAPTER IV.

REASONABLE RULES.

IN the morning, after the two little studies made for Florence and John under the octagon window were finished, the children were called to their work at nine o'clock, as usual, by means of a silver whistle which their mother blew at the front door. The whistle was sounded at five minutes before nine, so as to allow the children time to come in and get to their places, and begin to be ready for their studies at nine o'clock precisely.

"Now, children," said Mrs. Morelle, "you have got new places to study in, and I have been looking over my rules, and making some changes in them, and I am going to read them to you now, before you begin your work, so that you may see whether they are reasonable."

"I am sure that they will be reasonable, mother," said Florence, "without hearing you read them to us."

"True," said Mrs. Morelle, "I presume you would believe that they are reasonable from your

confidence in me ; but I want to have you see the reasonableness of them yourselves. It will be much more easy for you to obey them if you do."

I think that Mrs. Morelle was right in this wish. It is the duty of children to obey their parents in all things, whether they see the reasonableness of what they require or not. But it is much more easy and pleasant for them to obey if they see the reasonableness of the commands themselves beforehand. And as it is right that parents should do all they can to make the duty of obedience on the part of the children as easy as possible, it is always well to give them an opportunity to see the reasonableness of their commands whenever they conveniently can.

So Mrs. Morelle took out a paper and read the rules as follows :

RULE 1. All the instructions, and all the explanations which I give you in respect to your studies are to be given *at one time*, before you begin your work in the morning, so that I may not be interrupted afterwards in any thing that I am doing.

"I see the reasonableness of that," said Florence.

"Do you, too, Johnny?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"Why, yes, mother," said John, "pretty well, only sometimes I want to ask you a question very much indeed."

"True," said Mrs. Morelle; "but then that is not a serious difficulty, for if you get into any perplexity with one thing, there is always something else that you can do. And if I were to allow you to come to me with questions at all while you are studying, it would disturb me and would disturb Florence, and so do more harm than good. You can always make a memorandum of the question, too, in your question book, and so ask me the next morning."

"But before the next morning, I do not care any thing about it," said John.

"That shows that the question can not be very important," said Mrs. Morelle. "At any rate, that must be the rule, whether you see the reasonableness of it or not. I should be glad to have you see that it is a good rule, for then it would be a great deal easier for you to obey it. But now we will go to the next one."

RULE 2. You must see for yourselves that you have every thing you require for your work before you begin. I will *furnish* whatever you require, but you must *see that I do it*, so that if you find,

while you are at your work, that you want something that you have not got, you will consider that it is your fault, not mine.

"Is that a fair rule?" asked Mrs. Morelle, after she had finished reading it.

The children both admitted that it was, and John, near whose study they were all sitting while this conversation was going on, began immediately to open his drawer to see if he had every thing there that he required. But his mother requested him to wait, before making his examination, until she had finished reading the rules.

RULE 3. If either of you find it necessary to leave your study during study hours for any purpose, either to speak to me, or to go out, you can do so, but in that case you must make up for the interruption, by staying in another half hour after your regular hour has expired.

"I think that that is rather a hard rule for us," said John.

"I think it is hard myself," said Mrs. Morelle, "and I have tried a great deal to contrive some easier way of preventing you from getting into the habit of leaving your work and going out to

get some water, or something of that kind, and so not working your full hour. Can you think of any easier way?"

"Why, if we have a really good excuse, you might let us go," said John.

"Ah, but that would require me to spend my time in hearing the excuses, and there is nothing I like so little to hear about as excuses. Then I can not always judge, even if I hear them, whether they are good or not. So I think that my plan is the best. If you think the reason requiring you to leave your places in order to come and speak to me, or to go out, is so urgent that you are willing to stay at your studies half an hour longer, then you can do it. If not, not."

"It seems to me that half an hour is too long," said John. "Don't you think that a *quarter* of an hour would be enough, mother?"

"I am afraid not," replied Mrs. Morelle; "but if *you* think that will be enough, I am willing to try it. We will try it and see, and if a quarter of an hour proves to be enough to keep you steady at your work, I shall be very glad. I should much rather have it a quarter of an hour than a half an hour, if that plan proves to be effectual. But remember that it is your plan,

and not mine. I am afraid that it will not do, but I am willing that you should try it."

So this point was settled.

RULE 4. If any company comes into the room, pay no attention to them, and do not speak to them, except to answer them if they speak to you.

"That's reasonable," said John.

"I think so too," said Florence.

"Those are all the rules," said Mrs. Morelle ; "so now you can begin your lessons. Your work to-day, is to copy for half an hour, and then to do sums for half an hour. See now whether you have all that you want."

So the children looked over their drawers to see whether they had a good stock of pens and pencils—both lead and slate pencils, and plenty of ink in their inkstands, and sponges well wet, and a copy-book to write in, and their arithmetic books, and every thing else that was required.

"Think well," said Mrs. Morelle, "for if you find by-and-by that you want something that you have not got, it will cost you half an hour of extra study to come and ask for it."

"Perhaps I may want a drink of water," said John.

"And I too," said Florence.

"True," said Mrs. Morelle. "That is very important. So you may both go out and ask Bridget to give you some water to drink now. For if you both have a good drink of water now, you can very well get through an hour without having another."

So the children went out and drank some water, and then came back to their lessons. When they were ready to begin, Mrs. Morelle turned the hour glass, and they both at once proceeded to their writing.

CHAPTER V.

THE LOST BALL.

FLORENCE and John were confined to their work in the little studies in the octagon room only two hours each day ; one hour in the forenoon, and one in the afternoon. But their mother endeavored to carry forward their education at other times by her conversation with them, and by leading them in their plays to such operations and plans as should excite and develop their ingenuity, and enlarge their general knowledge. She availed herself of every occurrence that took place to accomplish this purpose, and she took great pleasure in doing it.

You will see how she managed this, by the case of the lost ball. One day Florence and John, together with another boy named Charlie Dresler, were at play in the yard with their India rubber balls. They had been playing with them near a sort of wing, or extension of the house, which contained the back kitchen and the shed, and had been throwing them against the chimney of this addition, which came out at the roof

near the ridge-pole. This chimney belonged to the back kitchen. The children had three balls, one for each of them, and they had been throwing their balls against the chimney, in order to see them rebound and then come rolling over the roof to the eaves, and so off the eaves toward the ground, where they stood trying to catch them as they came down.

Now if at some time when you are at play in a yard, or in any other place near a house, you will look up toward the roof, you will see that there is usually a long and narrow conduit for the water, placed under the eaves. This conduit is for the purpose of catching the water which comes from the roof during rains, and conveying it away to one side, where it can all descend to the ground together, instead of dripping down all along the side of the house. Sometimes the water that is brought along in the conduit under the eaves in this way, comes down at the corner of the house in a spout and runs into a cistern or a hogshead, or some reservoir of that kind placed there to receive it, and sometimes it is left to flow away over the ground. It is not always the case that these conduits—or *gutters*,* as they are sometimes called—are placed

* They are called gutters from the Latin word *gutta*, which means *drop*. They are drop-catchers.

under the eaves of buildings, but it is generally so.

Whenever, therefore, children go to play with their balls upon roofs, they ought always to ascertain whether or not there is a gutter under the eaves, for these gutters are very apt to catch and retain the ball.

The children in this case threw their balls over the roof, against the chimney, a great many times without any accident. The balls, when they came to the eaves, after rolling down the roof, bounded over the gutter, and so came safe to the ground. But at last John's ball got caught. Instead of coming over to the ground, it stopped in the gutter, and John could see the upper edge of it swelling a little above the edge of the gutter, as he stood upon the ground below.

John was in great trouble at this sight. "There !" he exclaimed, in a tone of great concern, "now I have lost my ball."

John was very sorry to lose his ball. The children were, in fact, always very careful of their playthings, for they both of them had a fixed allowance of so much money per week to expend for their amusement, and whenever they met with any loss of this kind it could only be repaired by a fresh expenditure out of their own funds.

John immediately went into the house, followed by the other children, to report the accident to his mother, and to ask her what he should do. His mother was sitting at her table, folding and sealing a letter.

"It has got caught in the gutter then," said she, after John had finished his story.

"Yes, mother," said John. "And I'm very sorry."

"Well, now, *I* am rather glad," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Glad, mother!" said John, quite surprised. "Why are you glad?"

"Because I think you will have such a good time in getting it again."

"But, mother, how can we get it again?" asked Florence.

"There are several ways that I can think of," said Mrs. Morelle. "I will tell you what they are, and you can take your choice. In the meantime, it is very fortunate that it is an India rubber ball, and not one of leather."

"Why, mother?" asked Florence.

"Because, if there should come a rain before you get it down, or a heavy dew, it will not be injured. India rubber is a substance that is *impervious* to water. That is, water can not pass into the pores of it in the least degree, or alter

it in any way. Leather is full of minute pores, and the water gets in and changes and spoils the texture. But an India rubber ball is safe. The water does not act upon it in any way."

"What do you mean by acting upon it, mother?" said John.

"It does not change it," said Mrs. Morelle, "or produce any effect upon it at all. There are some things that are impervious to water, that is, the water can not enter into their pores, while still it *acts* upon them and changes them. Water acts upon iron in this way. It turns it into rust, and so gradually consumes it, though it can not enter into the pores of it. But now about the ways of getting down your ball."

"Yes, mother," said John, "tell us all the plans you can think of, and let us choose the easiest and best."

CHAPTER VI.

FOUR PLANS.

"I CAN think of four plans," said Mrs. Morelle. "The first is for you to go to work and build up a great wood pile under the place where the ball is lodged. You must build until you get a pile so high that you can stand upon it and reach the ball."

"Could we do that?" asked Florence.

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "you can do it, I think, if you have patience and perseverance enough. There is plenty of wood in the shed, which you can bring out. You would have to pile it carefully, laying the sticks crosswise, first this way and then that, so as to make the pile steady and firm, and you would have to extend it on one side in the form of steps, so that you could climb up. After a while, you could get it so high that you could stand upon it and reach the ball."

"That is a very good plan," said John, clapping his hands.

"You must expect that it will be a great deal of work," said his mother.

"I'll help you," said Charlie.

"You will have to carry the wood all back again, too, after you have got your ball," said Mrs. Morelle, "and that will be the hardest part of the work, because you will not take any interest in it. You will take a great interest in building up your pile to get your ball, and that will make your work easy. But you will not take any interest in carrying the wood away again, and that would make that part of the work very hard."

"Will you help us carry the wood away, too, Charlie?" asked John.

"Yes," said Charlie.

"Well," said John, "then let us go and begin."

"But you have not heard all the plans yet," said his mother.

"No," said Florence, "we have only heard one. What are the rest, mother?"

"The next plan is for John or Charlie to climb up by a rope, hand over hand, and so get the ball. Do you think you can climb up in that way, Johnny?"

"I do not know," said John.

"Sailors can," said Mrs. Morelle "They take

hold of a rope that is fastened at the top and hangs down, and so pull themselves up, taking hold of the rope higher and higher, first with one hand and then with the other."

"*Perhaps* I could do it," said John. "I should like to try. I am pretty sure that Grimkie could do it if he were here."

"But there is not any rope to climb up by," suggested Florence.

"No," said her mother, "that is the great difficulty with this plan—to get the rope up and to get it fastened. You will have to do as the sailors do when they want to get a rope ashore from a wreck. Suppose a ship is wrecked upon the rocks very near a shore, and all the people of the country have come down to the place to help, but they can not get to the ship, and the sailors can not get to the shore on account of the tremendous waves and breakers that are dashing in continually against the cliffs. In such a case, the only way that the sailors can be saved is by getting a line on shore."

"And how do they do it?" asked John.

"We will suppose that it is not very far," said Mrs. Morelle, "no farther than a man can throw a stone. The sailors find a stone, or something like that, and tie a piece of fine twine to it. One of the strongest among them then takes the

stone and throws it to the shore. The people on the shore stand out of the way until the stone falls, and then they pick it up, and so get hold of the end of the twine. Now, one end of the twine is in the hands of the people on the shore, and the other end the sailors have on board the ship. Do you understand so far?"

The children all said they did.

"The sailors now take a small cord," continued Mrs. Morelle, "stronger a great deal than the twine, but not so large and heavy as even a small rope. They tie one end of this cord to the end of the twine, and by this means the people on the cliff draw one end of the cord to the shore. The sailors then tie their end of the cord to a *rope*. Thus by means of the cord they get a rope on shore, and by means of the rope, they contrive in the same way to get a cable to the shore. When they get the cable across, they fasten the ends, one on board the ship and the other to the rocks, and so the sailors can all get safe to land."

"I do not see how they can get to the land," said Florence, "over that single cable."

"The people draw them over," replied her mother, "in a tub or basket which they hang to the cable by means of loops. It is a terrible thing to be drawn in this way across from a ship

to the rocks on shore, over the billows, but it is much better for people to consent to this, than to remain on board till the ship is broken to pieces, and so all be drowned."

"And could we get a rope up to the roof of the shed in such a way as that?" asked Florence.

"Perhaps you might," replied Mrs. Morelle. "The way would be this. First, you must get a long piece of twine. Your kite twine will answer. You must unwind enough of the twine to go over the shed, and then make up what you unwind into a neat open coil on the ground. You must be very careful not to disturb it where it lies upon the ground, or you will get it entangled. Next, you must tie one end of the twine to a stone, and then you must throw the stone over the shed, on one side of the chimney, and let the twine follow it. One of you must stand on the other side of the shed—at a good distance off, however—in order to see where the stone falls. If you get the stone across, then you must tie one end of the rope to the end of the twine."

"But we have not got any rope," said John.

"Ah! that is a serious difficulty," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is very necessary to have a rope. Indeed, we can do nothing at all, on this plan of operation, without one."

“But I will tell you what we can do,” added Mrs. Morelle, after a moment’s pause. “I will lend you a rope. A clothes-line will answer if it is new and strong, and Bridget wants a new clothes-line; she told me so this morning. So I will give you some money, and you can go into the village and buy me a clothes-line—a good strong one—and I will lend you that. Should you be willing to take the trouble of going to buy it?”

The children said that they should be perfectly willing to do that. Indeed, nothing pleased them better than to go on errands of this kind to the stores in the village. And Mrs. Morelle liked very much to employ them in such commissions, as they learned in this way to do business, and acquired knowledge in respect to men and things, which she thought would be useful to them in future life.

“Very well, then,” said Mrs. Morelle. “When you get the clothes-line, and have thrown the twine over the roof, on one side of the chimney, you must then tie the twine to one end of the rope, and so draw the end of the rope over the roof. Then you must throw the stone back again on the other side of the chimney, and draw the end of the rope back. By this means, the rope will be passed round the chimney. You

can then bring the two ends together, and see if you can climb up by them, hand over hand."

"That is an excellent plan," said John, eagerly. "We will do it that way. Don't you like that way, Florence?"

Florence, who was somewhat more calm and quiet in her temper than John, said that she liked that way very much, if John was sure that he could climb up the ropes hand over hand. But before she finally decided, she wished to hear the other ways first.

"Very well," said her mother; "I will tell you them all. I have told you two already. There are two more. The third is for you to make a ladder."

"Could we make a ladder, mother?" asked John.

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "I think you could make one long enough and strong enough to get up to the eaves of the shed, if you were willing to go to work systematically, and follow my directions, and persevere steadily to the end. I will not tell you how you must go to work to make the ladder, unless you decide that that will be the way that you prefer."

"I think I should rather prefer the rope," said John, "though I should like to make a ladder very well."

"What is the other plan?" asked Florence.
"You said there were two more."

"The other plan," said Mrs. Morelle, "is for Bridget to take a chair and carry it out to the place, and then to get the long-handled rake which they use to rake the grass on the lawn, and stand up in the chair and reach up, and so pull the ball out of the gutter with the rake."

"I don't believe she could reach," said John.

"Have you made any calculation about it in your mind?" said his mother; "or is that only a conclusion you have jumped at, suddenly?"

"I have not made any calculation in particular," said John, "only I think the ball is too high for her to reach in that way."

"It is always best to make a little calculation in such cases," said Mrs. Morelle. "I will show you how to make the calculation. How high do you think the eaves of the shed are above the ground? Twice as high as a man's head?"

"Just about," said John.

"I think it is higher," said Charlie.

"You had better go and see," said Mrs. Morelle. "All run out together. Take your stand at a little distance, and imagine one man standing upon another man's head, and see if you think the topmost man's head would come up to the eaves."

Mrs. Morelle was never sparing of directions to the children to run about on such occasions as this. The more they ran about, the better it would be for them, she well knew. So whenever there was an opportunity to interest them in going anywhere, she always let them go.

In a few minutes, the children returned, saying that they thought the eaves of the roof were just about twice as high as a man's head above the ground.

"Then," said Mrs. Morelle, "I think that Bridget could reach the ball with the rake, standing in a chair. The chair would be about fourteen inches high, and Bridget herself is about five feet, and the rake, we will say, is seven feet and a half more. That would make how many feet?"

The children got a little confused in reckoning it, and so Mrs. Morelle sent John to his study to bring a slate and pencil from the drawer. When he had brought the slate, he put down the numbers in order, one under the other. Florence and Charlie looked on all the time. Of course he called the fourteen inches 1 ft. 2 in., and the seven feet and a half, 7 ft. 6 in. On adding them up, he found that the distance Bridget could reach with the rake, was 13 ft. 8 in., provided the estimate of the numbers was correct.

"Now the height of a man is about six feet," said Mrs. Morelle, "and twice that is—?"

"Twelve feet," said John.

"Very well. Now if we take 12 ft. from 13 ft. 8 in. ; it leaves 1 ft. 8 in. So that if our estimates are right, Bridget could reach more than a foot above the place where the ball lies."

Still the children thought that the plan of having Bridget stand up in a chair, and pull down the ball with a rake, was altogether too simple and commonplace a method to please them. They greatly preferred throwing over a rope, or making a ladder.

"Very well," said their mother. "You can try either mode that you like. The rope plan will be much quicker and easier than the other, provided that you can climb up hand over hand when you get the rope fixed."

"I'm almost sure I can," said John. "And at any rate, Grimkie can, if I can not."

"Very well, then," said Mrs. Morelle, "you can try that plan. And you can go now and buy the rope, if you please. I will go for my purse and give you some money."

Mrs. Morelle was pretty well convinced that neither John, nor Charles, or even Grimkie, could really climb up by a rope hanging in that manner

from the eaves. But she knew that the work of buying and fixing the rope would be good and amusing exercise for them, and also that their efforts in trying to climb up would be excellent gymnastic exercise. So she was very willing that they should make the attempt.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPELLING LESSON.

WHEN the children were at work at their studies, they usually wrote for half an hour. The object of this writing exercise was twofold. It was to teach them to write, and to teach them to spell.

Their writing lessons did not consist, as usual, of writing over and over again a single line given them for a copy, but of transcribing at length a continued extract, which consisted usually of some statement of facts, or interesting anecdote, or amusing piece of poetry. The children had large and prettily bound books to make these transcriptions in, and now and then Mrs. Morrelle gave them pictures to paste into them. They pasted these pictures in by touching a little gum to the four corners. These pictures made the books much more attractive than they otherwise would have been, and caused the children to prize them very highly, and to take a great deal of pains to make the writing look neat and uniform.

"I am very glad you take such good care not

to let any careless writing get into your books," said Mrs. Morelle, one morning when she had been looking them over. "If you fill them full in this way with interesting stories, all well written, and with pretty pictures, you will value them very much, and perhaps keep them as long as you live, and read them and show them to other children when you are grown up and have perhaps gone away from the Octagon for ever."

The children were instructed, while they were copying the passages in their books, to notice the spelling of the words particularly, so as to remember how to spell them themselves, when they should afterwards have occasion to write them without having any books before them to copy from. Then the next morning, when Mrs. Morelle looked over the writing, she used to give out a number of the words to the children to be spelled, in order to see if they remembered, and also to keep up in their minds the idea of noticing the spelling of the words when they were writing. In this way the children learned to spell very well, and in an easy and pleasant manner, and that too without making their mother any considerable trouble.

Often, in order to test the spelling of the children, and also to give them a little practice in composition, their mother, instead of giving them

something to copy, word for word, from a book, would direct them to read the passage or the story once to themselves, and then to shut the book, and put it away, and write the substance of the passage as well as they could from memory, expressing the sense in their own words, and spelling the words as well as they could from their own general knowledge of orthography. Only in such cases when they came to a word about which they were doubtful, they were to look it out in a small dictionary, which they had been provided with for that purpose.

Sometimes Mrs. Morelle would write a little story, or something of the kind herself, and read it to the children, and then let them write off what they could remember of it in their books. On the morning after the children had lost the ball, the story that she read to them was this :

THE BROOK.

Once there was a brook, a very bright and sparkling brook. It had two mills to turn. One of these mills was above, and one was below. The brook had first to turn one, and then to run along a little way over the rocks till it came to the other.

One morning the brook woke up early The sun was shining very bright.

“Come,” said the brook, “I must wake up and go and turn my mills.”

So it ran along over the rocks till it came to the mills, and it worked busily all day turning them. The water turned the big wheels under the mills, and the big wheels turned the little wheels, and the little wheels turned the stones, and the stones ground the wheat and the corn, and thus all the people that lived in that country had a great deal of flour and meal to make bread and cakes for their children.

At last, when night came, the waters of the brook ran along to a still place where there was room for it to lie broad and deep under willow banks, and among pretty tufts of lilies and bulrushes, and there it went to sleep. The next morning it woke up and flowed on to the sea, and there the sun shone upon it, and carried it all up in vapor into heaven, where it made bright and beautiful clouds, glowing in the sun.

The moral of this story is, that we must do well whatever is given us to do during the day, and then we shall sleep sweetly at night, and rise at last, when life is over, to be bright and happy in heaven.

In these exercises the children were to write wholly from memory, and if they had forgotten any part they were not to ask about it, but to do the best they could alone. They were also forbidden to ask how any word was spelled, but if they were not sure how it was spelled from their own recollections they were to look it out in the dictionary.

The next morning, when Mrs. Morelle went to look at the children's books, she took Florence's first, to see what she had written. The performance was as follows :

THE PRETTY LITTLE BROOK.

Once there was a little brook. It was very bright and sparkling, and it ran among the mossy stones.

It had two mills to turn. First it turned one mill, and then it turned the other. It turned the mills by the wheels. It took hold of the wheels and turned them round and round, and so it ground the farmers' grain, that they could have some bread and cakes for their little children.

After a while, night came, and the brook went to sleep in the pretty meadows, with flowers all

along the banks of it, and willows hanging over the water. The next morning it woke up and went out into the sea, and from the sea it went up into heaven, and was changed into beautiful clouds, golden and red, where the sun shone upon them.

MORAL.

We must be industrious, and do our duty every day, like the little brook, and when we go to bed, we must say our prayers, and when we die, we shall go to heaven and be very beautiful there.

Whenever Mrs. Morelle read and corrected compositions of the children such as this, she often, after reading the piece, fell into conversation with the children in respect to the subject of it, and in many cases imparted to them a great deal of very useful information. In this instance, Florence, after her composition had been read, asked her mother where all the water that runs by continually in a brook could come from.

"It can not come from the rain," said she, "for the brook runs just as much when it does not rain as when it does rain."

"Oh, no! not so much," said John

"It runs, at any rate," said Florence, "if it does not run so much."

"That is true," said Mrs. Morelle, "but still the water in the brook all comes from the rain. The water which falls in rain upon the tops of the hills and mountains, soaks down into the ground until it comes to beds of rocks or of clay, or something else that it can not soak through. Then it spreads out on one side or the other, according as the beds of rocks or clay slope this way or that, and finally comes out of the ground part way down the side of the hill. If it comes out in a place where there are a great many rocks and very little ground, it forms *springs*. If it comes out in a place where there are but few rocks and a great deal of ground, then it forms a *swamp*. Small streams of water flow from the springs and from the swamps, and they run together when they have gone a little way, and this makes the beginning of the brook. It is only a little brook at first, such as a boy could easily step over ; but it grows larger and larger as other brooks come into it, some on one side and some on the other, until at last it becomes a great stream, and finally a river, and so it goes on until in the end it reaches the sea."

"I should like to see one of the little springs," said Florence.

"They are very pretty sometimes," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is curious to see the water boiling up, so clear and cool, from under a rock, with green mosses, and brakes, and water plants of all kinds growing around the spot. Sometimes, in countries where the mountains are very large and high, so as to contain a great deal of water, the springs that break out at the foot of them are of enormous size. I have seen springs in Switzerland almost as large as this room, with water coming out of them in a torrent, enough to make quite a little river at once."

"I wish, mother, that you would take us to Switzerland to see them," said John, eagerly.

"Perhaps I shall, some day," said Mrs. Morelle.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAND OVER HAND.

THE experiment of passing the clothes-line around the chimney by means of a twine thrown over the roof by a stone, first on one side of the chimney, and then back on the other, as proposed by Mrs. Morelle, succeeded very well, but the plan of John's climbing by it, hand over hand, failed, as she expected it would.

The children went into the village to buy the clothes-line immediately after the conversation which they held with their mother on the subject. They selected a rope quite large and strong. When they got home, they found it was too late for their experiment that afternoon, and so they concluded to put it off till the next day, when Charlie promised to come and help them at eleven o'clock, which was the earliest time that they should be sure to have completely finished their studies for the forenoon.

At a quarter before eleven the children went out into the yard, and very soon afterward, Charlie came. They all immediately went to

work. One of them opened the clothes-line, and laid it in a coil on the ground, near the shed. Another unwound a portion of the twine, as much as they judged to be necessary to go across the shed, over the roof, and reach to the ground on the other side. Then John selected a good stone to throw over, and tied one end of the twine to it. He then sent Charlie round to the other side of the shed, with instructions to go back a great way, so as to be sure that the stone should not hit him, and when he saw that the coast was clear, to call out "ALL CLEAR!" John, as soon as he heard this call, was to respond—"AYE-AYE!" and immediately afterwards, to throw the stone. Charlie was to watch the stone when it fell, and run to the spot to find it. As soon as he found it, he was to call out, "ALL RIGHT!" and also, "PULL IN!" On hearing this call, John was to pull in the slack of the twine, cut it off at the right length, and then tie the end of the clothes-line to it, which Florence was to hand him. As soon as it was tied, he was to call out aloud to Charlie on the other side of the shed, to "HAUL AWAY!" and Charlie was to pull the end of the rope over the shed, to the back side. John was to remain on the front side, in order to prevent the rope from catching, or getting into kinks.

This operation was performed very successfully, and the rope was passed over the shed on the south side of the chimney. Then John and Florence went round to the back side, and Charlie came to the front, and John threw the stone and the twine back again, taking care this time, however, to throw it on the north side of the chimney. Then they all went again to the front side, and pulled the rope in, and then they brought both ends of the rope together on the front side of the shed, while the middle of it was passed round the chimney.

John immediately proceeded to twist the two ends of the rope together, from the eaves to the ground, and then, after taking off his jacket, and looking up very resolutely at the place where the rope came over the edge of the roof, he tried to climb up. He reached his right hand up as far as he could, and endeavored to draw himself up by it, so as to take hold at a higher point with his left hand. But he found his weight too heavy for his strength. After two or three fruitless attempts, he desisted, and turning to Florence, he said,

"I know exactly how it is done, but somehow I can not do it."

Florence then thought that she would try, but she did not succeed so well as John had done.

She could scarcely lift herself up from the ground at all.

Then Charlie wanted to try. He went to work with an extremely resolute and determined air, and with a sort of sudden rush, as if he meant to take the rope by surprise. But he made no progress in ascending.

Then John tried again, but it was all in vain.

"I did not think it was so hard," said he. "I have seen the sailors do it a great many times on board the sloops on the river, and I thought it was pretty easy. But it is not easy at all. It is very hard. I do not believe that even Grimkie can do it."

So John went in and told his mother that they had got the rope fixed around the chimney, but that they could not climb up hand over hand, and so in order to get the ball he believed he must make a ladder.

"Very well," said his mother, "but you have worked long enough upon it for to-day, or at least for this morning. To-morrow I will show you how to go to work to make a ladder. In the meantime you have done some good by making the experiment. You have got Bridget a new clothes-line, and I am much obliged to you for it. So now go and take

the line down, and coil it up as it was when you bought it, and give it to Bridget, and also wind up your twine again and put it in its place."

John was quite disappointed at the failure of his attempt to go up a rope hand over hand, but he was in some measure consoled by the kind and considerate manner in which his mother spoke to him in respect to his disappointment. Mrs. Morelle was always accustomed, when the children made mistakes or met with misfortunes, to look on the bright side of the case as much as possible, and never to trouble them at such times with reproofs, or by saying to them, You might have known better.

The consequence of this management was that they loved to come to her in all their troubles, whatever they might be.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXPERIMENT.

THE children themselves forgot the experiment which their mother had promised them in relation to steam, but she herself reminded them of it one morning at breakfast. She had a silver kettle upon a side table near her at breakfast time, with the water in it. The kettle rested upon two pivots, which pivots were supported upon a stand; and upon the stand under the kettle was a spirit lamp which kept the kettle boiling. While it was thus boiling, a cloud of white vapor issued continually from the nose of the kettle.

"Now, children," said Mrs. Morelle, after Florence and John had finished eating the hot cakes which they had for breakfast that morning, "now for the experiment."

"You see this kettle," said she. "It is half full of water, and there is a lamp under it, which keeps it boiling. You know what a great bubbling there is always when water is boiling. I will tell you exactly what makes it.

“If you heat water, it remains water still, until it gets heated up to a certain point, and then it suddenly changes into steam. Now this steam is perfectly clear and transparent, like the air. There is no cloudiness about it at all. It is just like the air, only it is very hot—scalding hot—and it is all composed of particles of water.

“Now you see that when a kettle is placed over a fire, or over a lamp, the heat comes against the bottom of it, and, of course, it is the water next to the bottom which gets heated so as to be turned into steam. Now, when a little of the water next the bottom gets turned into steam, it forms a bubble, and this rises up through the water, because it is so light. Before it gets to the top, however, another bubble forms, and another, and all these bubbles coming up make the bubbling.

“If we could heat the water on the top, instead of below, it would boil without any bubbling.”

“And could we do that in any way?” asked John.

“We might hold a hot iron over it, I suppose,” said Mrs. Morelle; “or blow a current of heat down upon it by some sort of blast. But in common modes of heating water, the heat comes in at the bottom. And so the steam is formed at the

bottom, and comes up through the water in bubbles, and that makes a great bubbling.

"Now if this kettle was made of glass," continued Mrs. Morelle, "so that you could see what was in it above the water, you would see that it is perfectly transparent, like air. There would be no cloudiness to be seen at all. And when the steam comes out of the nose of the tea-kettle, it comes out transparent and clear at first. But afterwards, when it comes to the cool air, it is cooled, and then turned into water again. Every small portion of the steam becomes an extremely little globule of water—*extremely little*."

"As little as the head of a pin?" asked Florence.

"Oh yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "a great deal smaller than that. I suppose that hundreds of them would not make a mass as large as the smallest piece that could be cut off from the *point* of a pin. But small as they are, they are all perfectly round and clear, like little balls of glass."

"What makes them so round?" asked Florence.

"The moment the watery particles in the steam are cooled, so as to turn again to water," said Mrs. Morelle, "they attract each other. The particles of water always attract each other

in this way. Now, as they are floating in the air, and all attract each other equally on every side, they pull each other together, and form the mass into an exact ball. They are too small for us to see them singly, but the light that shines upon them is reflected from each one, and all the lights make up the white cloudiness that we see.

"So you see that what comes from the locomotive," continued Mrs. Morelle, "was real steam when it came out of the pipe, but it becomes a mass of little globules of water as soon as it mixes with the cool air, and then the reflection of the light from all the little globules makes the cloudiness that we see."

"So then it is water that we see, and not steam," said John, "after all."

"No, not exactly that. It is the light we see reflected from water, and not water itself."

"At any rate, it is not steam," said John. "I told Florence that she was wrong in calling it steam. But she would insist positively that it was steam."

"I do not think she was wrong," said Mrs. Morelle. "Strictly speaking, and in a philosophical sense, it is not steam; but in common conversation, such a cloudy vapor is always called steam, and so it is very proper for us to call it

so, provided, only, that we understand what it really is."

Mrs. Morelle then called the attention of the children to the nose of the tea-kettle, where the steam was coming out, and she showed them that close to the nose nothing was to be seen. It was only after the steam had gone out far enough to begin to mix with the cool air, so that the little drops could form, that it began to look cloudy."

After considering these facts, and talking about them for some time, John said that it was all very interesting, and he understood it better than he did before, but he did not think, he said, that they had had much of an experiment.

"You promised us an experiment, mother," said he, "and you only let us see a tea-kettle boiling. I do not think that is much of an experiment."

"Then let me see if I can not make an experiment for you," said Mrs. Morelle. "If I could put a cork into the nose of the tea-kettle, and wedge the cover down tight, perhaps the steam would blow the cork out, like a bullet from a gun."

Both John and Florence were very eager to see this experiment performed, and their mother said that she would try and see if she could arrange it. So she rolled up two or three napkins

into a tight roll, and crowded them in between the cover of the tea-kettle and the bail, in order to force all the steam to go out at the nose. When she had accomplished this, she brought a cork from the closet, and crowded it into the nose of the kettle, and then putting the spirit lamp under it again—for she had taken the lamp away while she was securing the lid and putting in the cork—she took John and Florence aside to await the result.

In a few minutes the cork flew out with great force, and struck the wall on the opposite side of the room. The cork was followed by a great puff of vapor, which was formed by the surplus steam, which had accumulated in the kettle till it had acquired force enough to drive the cork out.

John and Florence both admitted that this was really an experiment. Indeed, Florence was a little frightened, and did not wish her mother to try it again. John, however, was exceedingly pleased, and begged his mother to put the cork in again, and to crowd it in harder, but she thought it was not safe.

I do not think it was safe myself. In fact, I think that the experiment that she did perform was in some degree dangerous, for the expansive force of steam, when it is confined, is very great. Water, when it is changed to steam, at the usual

boiling point, expands about seventeen hundred times. That is, the steam requires *seventeen hundred times* as much space for itself as the water that it was made from. And it *will have* this increased space if it can possibly get it. It pushes this way, and that way, and every way, to find room. It was this pushing of the steam that forced the cork out of the nose of the tea-kettle. It is the same sort of pushing against the piston in the steam engine, first on this side, and then on that, that moves the piston to and fro with such force, and makes the engine go. It is very dangerous playing with such a force as this in a parlor, among children, especially when it is so closely connected with a considerable quantity of scalding water.

But Mrs. Morelle was very courageous, and she often incurred great risks in training and teaching her children.

"I must teach them to brave danger sometimes," said she to herself, "and I must be willing to brave it myself with them, or they will grow up cowardly and weak, and good for nothing."

CHAPTER X.

THE LADDER.

ON the morning after the day on which the children failed in their attempt to climb up by a rope, hand over hand, to get the ball that was lodged under the eaves of the house, they asked their mother at breakfast to tell them about making a ladder.

"Ah! yes," said she, "you had a plan of making a ladder. Well, I will tell you how to do it. But I warn you beforehand, that three things will be necessary to enable you to succeed in such a work as making a ladder. It will be necessary for you to work scientifically, systematically, and perseveringly."

"What hard words to understand!" said Florence.

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "the words are rather hard to understand, but what they mean is very easy to understand."

"What do they mean, then?" asked John.

"I will tell you," said Mrs. Morelle. "First.

scientifically means *knowingly*. To proceed scientifically, means that you should know beforehand exactly what you are going to do, and understand the principles which should govern you in doing it. You see a person might make a thing by guessing, or by having seen others make something like it, without himself knowing any thing about the why or the wherefore of the different portions of the work. For instance, a man who had seen a great many boats made might undertake to make one himself, and he might think he would make it about *so* long, wherever he happened to chalk a mark upon the plank, and *so* wide, and he might shape the bows of about such a form as they happened to come, without knowing why he gave the lines one curve rather than another. Another man, on the other hand, might make a calculation from the purpose that he wanted his boat for, how long it ought to be, and how wide, and then measure off his lengths accordingly. He might also know about the different forms of the bows of a boat, one form being better to stand against the shocks of waves, another for going faster through the water, and another still for making the boat hold a good many passengers, and giving them good and convenient seats. Now, if he were to consider which of these different qualities he wanted

for his boat, and should know the rules for shaping the bows, as one or another of the purposes was intended, and should shape the bows accordingly, by drawing the lines on the floor, according to the proper rules, he would proceed scientifically.

“So it is with you. When you are doing any thing, or are making any thing, and you know exactly what it is for, and make your calculations beforehand, to give the different parts the right strength and the right shape to answer the purpose that you intend, then you are proceeding scientifically. And that is what you must do in making your ladder. That is what you must do in all that you undertake in life, if you wish to be sure of succeeding in it. You *may* succeed, if you do not do so, but if you should, it would be by mere chance and luck.”

“Well, mother,” said John, who began to be a little impatient of these long instructions, “and what shall we do about the ladder?”

“In the first place, how long must your ladder be?” asked Mrs. Morelle.

“Twelve feet,” said Florence. “At least, the eaves, you said, were twelve feet high.”

“Then the ladder ought to be a little more than twelve feet,” said Mrs. Morelle, “because you want it to extend a little above the eaves,

so that it will lean firmly against them, and also that you may have a part rising above the roof for you to take hold of when you get up with your head above the roof. So we will say thirteen feet. You want your ladder to be thirteen feet long.

"And now about the way of making it," continued Mrs. Morelle. "The essential thing in a ladder, is the set of bars or cross-pieces, which form the steps for you to climb up by. These cross-pieces must, of course, be strong enough to bear your weight, and so they ought to be made of hard wood. They may be round, or they may be square."

"They almost always make them round," said John, "and they always call them *rounds*."

"Yes," replied his mother, "and can you think of any reason why they should be made round?"

The children, after considering this question a short time, said that they could not think of any reason. They did not see why the "*rounds*" might not just as well be made square.

"Because it is so much easier to make round holes in the sides of the ladder, to put them into, than it would be to make square holes," said Mrs. Morelle. "That may be one reason. Then another reason is, and I presume that it is the prin-

cipal one, that round bars are stronger in proportion to their weight, than square ones would be. But the difficulty will be for you to make the rounds, especially if you try to make them out of hard wood. But if you could find a number of old broom handles, and saw them each into three pieces, they would make very good rounds. Broom handles are always made of hard wood, and they are very strong."

"I can get plenty of broom handles," said John.

"And how long is a broom handle?" asked Mrs. Morelle. "Suppose you run out into the kitchen and measure."

John took the foot-rule from the drawer of his little study, and went out to measure the length of a broom handle. He found that it was a little more than four feet. The one he measured was four feet six inches.

"Now divide 4 ft. 6 in. into three parts," said Mrs. Morelle, "so as to see how long rounds we could make by sawing the broom handles into three parts."

After performing this division regularly on a slate, John found that a broom handle of 4 ft. 6 in. in length, would make three rounds eighteen inches each in length.

"That is longer than is necessary, I think," said Mrs. Morelle.

The children measured eighteen inches on the edge of the table, and they thought so too.

"Try dividing it into four parts," said Mrs. Morelle.

So they divided four feet six inches into four parts, and they found that it gave one foot one and a half inches for each part, and on measuring this on the edge of the table, John thought it would be wide enough.

"Plenty wide enough," said he. "All we want is to have the ladder wide enough to put my two feet on the round at a time."

"No," replied Mrs. Morelle. "That is not all we want width for in a ladder—to get room to stand. We want it for steadiness. A wide ladder stands more steadily than a narrow one, and a very narrow one would be so unsteady as to be unsafe. In New York, where they have very long ladders to go up to the tops of houses, four or five stories high, they have their ladders widened out at the foot a great deal, so as to make them stand steady."

Still Mrs. Morelle thought that rounds a little more than a foot long, would do very well, and would make the ladder wide enough.

"So now you see what I mean by going to work scientifically," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is considering carefully what qualities the thing

that you are making should possess, and then calculating the plan of construction so as to give it those qualities. And now the next calculation I am going to leave you to make yourselves—that is, to determine how many rounds you will want. You must see about how high you can step, and so determine how far apart your rounds must be. From this you can determine how many broom handles you will require.”

The children proceeded to make their calculations. John found by measuring that he could step up a foot at a time very easily. That would require twelve rounds for a ladder thirteen feet long—for the upper and lower rounds would be at some distance from the ends. And twelve rounds, he calculated, could be made out of three broom handles.

“And can you get three broom handles?” inquired Mrs. Morelle.

“Oh, yes,” said John. “I know where there are two myself, in the shed, and Charlie can find one at his house, I am sure.”

Mrs. Morelle then explained to the children how they were to make the side pieces. She said that they could not make them of the usual form of the side pieces of ladders, which was much the most convenient form for ladders that were to be moved about a great deal, but they could make

side pieces, she thought, that would answer the purpose very well, by finding a board thirteen feet long, and sawing two long strips from it about five inches wide, and then boring holes at equal distances in these strips.

"This will make a rough ladder, and one pretty clumsy, and inconvenient to carry about much," said she. "But it will be strong and safe, and you can manage it very well for one ascension to get your ball. And that is all you will want it for."

"Oh no, mother," said John. "I shall want to keep it, and climb up on the shed with it a great many times."

"Very well," said his mother. "We'll see."

CHAPTER XI.

WORKING SYSTEMATICALLY.

THE plan being all thus scientifically formed for making the ladder, Mrs. Morelle told John that he must proceed *systematically* with the work of carrying the plans into execution.

“If you were to go out at once and pull the board out from a pile and begin to saw it, without any plan in respect to the order of the work, and the mode of carrying it on, you would not succeed very well. You must have a systematic plan for doing the work, as well as a scientific one for laying it out.

“The first thing to be done is to get all the materials together, or at least provide for them all, so as to be sure that they will be ready when you want them. Then you must plan your work as to time, allowing a proper time for each part, so as not to hurry it, and so make mistakes. I will form a systematic plan for you, if you please.”

The children both said that they should be very glad to have their mother form a plan for them. So she formed it as follows :

"This morning, before school hours, you may go and see if you can find a proper board in the pile. Take the boards up one by one. One of you can take hold of each end, and so lift them off the pile one after another, and lay them down by themselves, till you come to such an one as you want. You want one thirteen feet long, and from nine inches to a foot wide. If you can find one about as wide as that, you will only have to saw it in two through the middle from end to end, once, and that will make your two side pieces. If you find such a board, lay it aside, and then put all the boards back upon the pile neatly again. Then carry the board that you have taken out round to the back platform, and lay it down here."

Mrs. Morelle went on to say that after getting their board, the children must look up their broom handles, so as to get them all ready. That they were to do after the study hours. It would be enough, she said, to get out the board before study hours.

"You must not undertake too much at a time," said she. "Always allow plenty of time for every part of the work, and then you will not get hurried and worried. You will find looking over the boards pretty hard work. In fact, it is not very pleasant work for a girl, and so, you

John, must play that you are a carpenter, and that Florence is your apprentice boy. You can play that her name is Alphonse, if you please."

"Well, we will," said John. "Come, Alphonse, I want you to go and help me overhaul a pile of boards."

The children did not come in again till the whistle sounded for study hours, and then they told their mother that they had got out a board which would do very well. It was fourteen feet long, and nine inches in breadth at one end, and ten at the other.

"That will be exactly right," said Mrs. Morrelle, "for if you saw it from end to end, through the middle exactly, it will make the side-pieces five inches wide at one end, and four inches and a half at the other. It is better that they should taper a little. A tapering form is the true form for them."

"Why, mother?" asked John.

"Because the lower end of the ladder, as it stands against a building, has a greater weight to bear than the upper end, and therefore it ought to be stronger. The reason for this, is that the upper part has only to bear the weight of the man who stands upon it, but the lower

part has not only to bear the weight of the man, but also of the whole length of the ladder."

"Then our board will be just right, Alphonse," said John, turning to Florence.

John said that he had also found two broom-handles, and that, after study hours, he was going to Charlie's house to see if he could not get another one there.

"That is right," said Mrs. Morelle. "Get all your materials and all your tools together before you begin the work. That is the way to proceed *systematically*."

The children then went to their little book-cases, in order to get their writing-books, and their slates, and when they had taken them out, they carried them to their mother, at her secretary, as they were accustomed to do, in order to show her the work which they had done the day before, and receive new instructions. When the work of the day before had been examined, and they had received the new instructions, they went to their places again, the hour-glass was set up, and they began their work, and went on with it in silence during the allotted time.

When the sand in the hour-glass had run out, showing that the hour had expired, the children put up their books and slates, and also their inkstands and their pens and pencils, and re-

stored them to the shelves of their bookcases, or to their drawers, and then shut the doors and locked them. Florence hung up her key on the little hook inside her drawer, which Grimkie had before this time screwed in for her. John put his key in his pocket.

"Now, mother," said John, "I am going to Charlie's to see if I can get a broom-handle there. I only want one more."

"But Charlie will not be at home now," said Mrs. Morelle. "He goes to school, you know, and he will not be at home till twelve o'clock."

"Oh! mother," said John, "he does not go to school half of the time. He hates to go to school, and so does Jane; and every morning they beg their mother to let them stay at home just for that day, and she does."

"Very well, then," said Mrs. Morelle, "perhaps you may find him at home."

So Florence and John set out together to go to Mrs. Dressler's house. In due time they returned, bringing with them the third broom-handle.

"Now we have got all the materials," said John.

"And the tools? Have you got the tools?" asked his mother.

"I have got my saw to saw the board in two,"

said John, "and a hammer to drive in the rounds, but there is not any thing to bore the holes with."

"What will you do about that, then?" asked his mother.

"I do not know," said John, hesitating, "unless I can borrow one somewhere."

"Do you know where you can borrow one?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"They have got two or three augers at the farm," said John.

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "Then we might go to the farm. I should like to go very much myself, if you would get a carriage and drive me."

"Yes, yes, mother," exclaimed John, joyously, "let us go. I should like to go very much." Then, after a moment, he added,

"Will it be your proposal or mine, mother?"

"It is my proposal," said his mother. "You said that they had augers at the farm, but it was I that proposed to go there and borrow one. I proposed it for the sake of the pleasure of the ride."

The import of John's question in respect to who made the proposal for the ride, was to determine whether he was to pay a portion of the expense or not. Mrs. Morelle did not keep

horses at the Octagon, but always hired them at a livery stable when she wished to take a drive, and the rule was, that whenever the children proposed a ride, they were to pay a part of the expense out of their allowance. Whenever their mother proposed it, and took the children to accompany her, then, of course, they had nothing to pay. They went in such cases as their mother's guests.

The allowance that the children received, was half a dollar a week each, and the amount that they paid when they themselves made the proposal for the ride, was ten cents each.

The reason why Mrs. Morelle did not have a stable at the Octagon, and keep horses there, was that she did not like to have the trouble of them. Her husband proposed it to her before he went away.

"I will buy you the best pair of carriage horses in the country," said he, "if you will have them."

"No," said she, "I could not have the trouble of taking care of them."

"But you could have a groom and a coachman to take care of them," said Mr. Morelle.

"No," said she, shaking her head with a smile, "I would rather have the care of the horses themselves, than of a groom and a coachman."

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOUNTAINEERS.

AFTER dinner that day, John set off with Florence to go down into the village to get a carriage and a pair of horses, to drive to the farm. He was very anxious always to have two horses, when he went out to ride.

He walked down the hill from the Octagon till he reached the village, and then, just as he was entering the principal street of the village which led to the livery stable, he suddenly stopped and took hold of Florence's arm, and turned as if to go into a side street, saying in a hurried manner, and in an undertone,

"Let's go *this* way."

"No," said Florence, hanging back and looking along the main street. "Here's Grimkie coming, and he will want to speak to you."

"No," said John. "No! That is the very reason why I don't want to go that way."

So saying, he hurried Florence into a side street, and walked along with her as fast as he could go.

Florence wondered what this could mean. John was usually glad to see Grimkie, and she could not imagine why he was so eager to avoid him in this instance. At length she asked what the reason was.

"Why, you see," said John, "if Grimkie sees us, he will ask where we are going, and he will want to go too, and if he goes he will want to drive almost all the way. And I can't let him drive. I must drive myself. That is the reason why I wanted to get the Mountaineers."

The Mountaineers were a pair of long-tailed, black horses, spirited, and yet gentle and kind. They had been raised in Vermont, on the sides of the Green Mountains, and were on that account called the Mountaineers.

"Oh, Johnnie!" exclaimed Florence, "you told mother that the reason why you wanted to have two horses was because one was not strong enough to drive all three of us."

"Well," said John, "that was a reason too."

Presently, after a short pause, Florence said,

"I don't think that you will keep Grimkie from knowing that we are going to ride, by coming all round this way. Very likely he is going up to our house—or if not, very likely we shall meet him somewhere on the way, as we go up in

the carriage. He is always running about in the streets."

"No matter," said John. "If we meet him and he asks if I am going to take a ride, I will tell him that *mother* is going, but that I am going to work on my ladder."

"Oh, John!" said Florence, "that will not be true."

"Yes," replied John. "That will be true. For I *am* going to work upon my ladder. I am going to the farm expressly to get an auger to work upon it with, and as soon as I get home, I am going to begin."

"Still I do not think that that would be true," said Florence.

John did not reply. He was convinced that what he had said was not strictly untrue, but then he had a feeling that there was something not quite right about it, and so he was silent. Besides, very soon after this, he came to the livery stable.

Florence went into the office, which was a small room by the door, near the entrance to the stable, and sat down upon the settee, there to wait until the horses should be got ready. She had a curiosity to see them bring out the horses and harness them, but it seemed to her more proper that she should remain in the office. She

amused herself while there, in looking about the room, and viewing the pictures on the walls. They were the pictures of horses running races together, or standing with a groom by the side of them, in a still attitude, as if *posed*, for the purpose of having their portrait painted.

There was a high desk in a corner with a slate upon it, and a man standing near it who seemed to be a sort of clerk. Very soon a bright and beautiful boy appeared suddenly at the door of the office and began to say,

"My mother wants a carriage at ——" Here the boy's eyes suddenly fell upon Florence sitting upon the settee, and he stopped.

"Very well," said the clerk taking up a pencil which belonged to the slate, and was tied to it by a long string, "go on."

"My mother wants a carriage," said the boy, beginning again, but still looking earnestly all the time at Florence—"at half past four o'clock, to go to the station."

"Mrs. Stanley?" said the clerk.

"Yes," said the boy; "in Irving street."

So the clerk wrote down the name and the hour upon the slate, and the boy went away.

Pretty soon after this, a colored man came to the door of the office and said, "Miss Florence, the carriage is ready."

So Florence went out of the office, and there at the door of the stable she found the carriage, with the two black horses harnessed into it, all ready. The carriage was a sort of a rockaway, open in front, with a forward seat for two facing the horses, and another seat behind. There was a door in the side. The colored man opened the door for Florence to get in.

"Come, Florence, get in," said John, "We are all ready. I had to send Marshall to tell you, for I could not leave the horses."

So Florence got in and took the back seat, and then Marshall, having shut the door, mounted in front, and took his seat by the side of John.

"Be careful, Master John," said he; "the Mountaineers are full of oats this afternoon."

Mrs. Morelle allowed John to drive the horses in coming up from the livery stable, provided a man came with him to interpose in case of any accident or unexpected difficulty. Even this was hardly necessary, for John had had a good deal of experience in driving, and knew how to manage horses very well.

They came on in this way round the corner, by the hotel, John driving, and Marshall sitting by his side. Florence was a little anxious, because there was a blacksmith's shop there, and a fire on the grass in front of it, which she was

afraid might frighten the horses, and she held on in her seat with both hands, but John came round in safety.

In this way the party proceeded up to the Octagon. When they reached the place, Marshall descended and opened the gate, and John drove in. He advanced along the graveled road till he came to the front door, and then reined the horses in opposite to the piazza.

Marshall remained until Mrs. Morelle was ready, and had got into the carriage. She took the seat by the side of John. Florence remained on the back seat. She was alone there at first setting out, but the plan was to stop on the way and invite Jane Dressler to go with her for company.

CHAPTER XIII.

ABOUT TESTS.

As the carriage passed out through the gate, and turned into the great road, John looked out up and down the road with a somewhat uneasy expression of countenance.

"Be careful, Johnny," said Mrs. Morelle; "take care how you drive. Are you looking for any thing?"

"I was looking to see if Grimkie was anywhere in sight," said John.

"Would you like to have Grimkie go with us?" asked Morelle. "For if you do, we might take him instead of Jane."

"No indeed," said John. "I do not want Grimkie to go, but I was afraid he would see us and ask to go."

"Yes, mother," said Florence, "John said that if he saw Grimkie, he was going to tell him he was not going to ride, but was only going to work upon his ladder."

"I did not say any such thing," said John.

"That is not a polite way of speaking, John," said Mrs. Morelle.

"But really, mother, I did not say that at all."

"Very likely," said Mrs. Morelle, "Florence may be mistaken about it. But it would be more polite for you to speak not so bluntly. You might say, Oh no Florence, I did not say exactly that, or I did not mean to say exactly that, or you misunderstood me, or, if I said that, I expressed myself wrong. It is never polite, and so it is never right, to contradict a person in that way by retorting bluntly, 'I did not say any such thing.'"

"I am sure he said something *like* that," said Florence, timidly.

"It was something like that," said John, "I allow, but it was not that. I said that I was going to tell Grimkie that mother was going to take a ride, but that I was going to work on my ladder. And that was true—exactly true."

"Would it be true, mother, to say that?" asked Florence.

"It is what we call prevarication," said Mrs. Morelle. "People very often use prevarication when they wish to deceive others, and yet do not like to say what is positively untrue."

"And do you think that is right?" asked Florence.

"What do you think, yourself?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"I think it is not right," said Florence

"And I think it is right," said John, "At least, I do not see the least harm in telling Grimkie that. I should have told him that mother was going to take a ride, and she is going to take a ride; and that I was going to work on my ladder, and I am. I should not have told him that I was not going to ride myself too. I was not obliged to tell him any more than I had a mind to, provided that all I did tell him was true."

"That is very good reasoning," said Mrs. Morelle.

"And so it was right," said John; "wasn't it mother?"

"What is right, and what is wrong," said Mrs. Morelle, "does not always depend upon reasoning. At least, we are very apt to deceive ourselves if we try to decide the question by reasoning about it. There is a certain *test* to be applied. I will not tell you whether I think what you were going to say would be right or wrong, but I will show you, some time or other, how to apply the test, so as to determine for yourselves. Do you know what a *test* is?"

"Not very well," said Florence.

"Did you ever go into a laboratory?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

The children both said that they had never been into a laboratory, but that they should like to go into one very much indeed.

"Then some day, when we go to New York," said their mother, "I will take you into one. A laboratory is a place where a chemist works. He keeps all sorts of substances there, in bottles, and jars, and boxes, and he makes experiments upon them. You carry any thing into him that you please, and he can examine it and tell you what it is. If you put a drop of any kind of acid in a phial full of water, he can find out if it is an acid, and what kind of an acid it is, and how much you put in."

"How does he do it?" asked John.

"He does it by means of his tests," said Mrs. Morelle. "He has various substances which he calls tests. He pours out a little of what you bring him, in a glass, and then he drops in a few drops of one or another of his tests. Sometimes the test, when it is dropped, will make a white cloudiness in what is in the glass. Or it may produce a blue tinge, or it may cause fumes to arise, red fumes, or green fumes. Or it may produce no visible effect at all. He looks attentively to see what the result is, and from the result he

finds out what it was you had in your phial. That is what is called *applying a test*. So in order to discover whether any thing is right or wrong, we can not always determine so well by reasoning about it as we can by applying the test. In respect to what John was going to say to Grimkie, I will explain to you what the test is, and then show you how to apply it, some time or other, but not now. We are coming to Mrs. Dressler's house now, and we must stop for Jane."

Mrs. Morelle had another reason for not saying any thing more at that time in respect to applying the moral test to the case of prevarication that had arisen, and that was, she had found by experience that she was far more successful in reaching the hearts of the children with the moral instruction which she gave them, if she chose suitable times for imparting it. She could give them instruction about visible and tangible objects connected with the external world, in the middle of the day, while they were walking or riding, and sometimes even while they were in the midst of their plays. But in order to teach them successfully any thing about moral duty, and especially to make any impression upon their hearts, she found it best to wait for some hour of quiet and seclusion, when their minds were unoccupied, and

their hearts were in a state of repose. Accordingly when questions like this arose in the middle of the day, she was accustomed to postpone the full elucidation of them till some more fitting time. This time was usually at evening, just before bed time, and sometimes even after the children had gone to bed, and before they went to sleep.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SNOW CLOUDS.

JANE DRESSLER came running to the door when she saw the carriage drawing up to the house, and when Florence called out to her and invited her to go and take a ride with them, she ran in eagerly to ask her mother's permission, and to get her bonnet and shawl. In a very few moments she came out again, attended by Julius, Mrs. Dressler's hired man. Julius opened the carriage door, and helped Jane to get in, and then shut and fastened it again. When he had done so, he called out,

"All ready, Master John !"

And so John drove on.

"Where are we going, Florence ?" asked Jane.

"We are going to the farm," said Florence.

"A carriage and two horses going out five miles to a farm house to borrow an auger."

Florence laughed heartily at what seemed the absurdity of such an expedition, for such an object.

"You see," said John, in explanation, "I am

making a ladder, and we want an auger to bore the holes in the side pieces, and there is no way to get one except to go to the farm and borrow one there."

"But," said Jane, "you might have bought one at the tool-store for a great deal less than it cost for these horses."

"Yes," said John, "but then we should not have had the ride."

In speaking thus to Jane, John turned a little to one side, so as to look back to the seat on which she was sitting, as he rode along. He still however kept a good look-out toward the horses. The road was smooth and hard, and the horses were in excellent spirits, and they trotted along at a very rapid rate. John knew very well how to drive them. He held the reins in one hand, and he had a very pretty whip, with a long lash, and a nicely made snapper at the end of it, in the other. He was careful however not to allow even the tip of the snapper of his whip to touch either of the horses, for they went at great speed without any outward stimulus, and it seemed to John that if he was to touch them in the slightest degree they would spring forward at once upon the run.

Mrs. Morelle sat by the side of John on the front seat, ready to assist in case of any accident

or other extraordinary emergency, but as long as every thing went well she did not interfere at all with John's driving.

"I would rather go to the farm to borrow the auger than not," said John continuing the conversation. "But in point of fact it is not really necessary for me to make the ladder at all. Grimkie could have got my ball for me by climbing up a rope."

"Can he climb up hand over hand?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"Yes, mother," said John, "he can go up just like a monkey. He was at our house yesterday, when Florence and I were out in the yard. He was going down to the river a-fishing with some other boys, and as he was going by, I asked him if he could climb up a rope, hand over hand, like a sailor. He did not answer my question, but instead, he asked me if I had a rope. So I showed him the clothes-line. Then he took one of the broom-handles that were there, and tied one end of the rope round the middle of it. Then he gave me the broom-handle with the rope tied to it, and told me to carry it up-stairs to a window that was open there, and to throw the rope down, but to keep the broom-handle up there. When I had done that, he told me to put the broom-handle across the

window, from one side of it to the other, so as to hold one end of the rope fast in the window. Then he took hold of the rope below and climbed up hand over hand, like a sailor, till he got to the window. When he got to the window, he climbed in, and then came down by the stairs.

"He said he could get my ball for me just as well as not, and that he would come if I liked and help me put the rope round the chimney again, and so climb up. But I thought I would rather make a ladder."

"What a boy he is!" said Mrs. Morelle.

"But there is one thing, mother," said John. "He marked the side of the house a little with his boots in climbing up."

"He ought to have taken his boots off," said Mrs. Morelle. "However, that is not *your* fault. And it is not of much consequence. That is a mischief I can easily have repaired."

The road which the party had been traveling thus far was on high land, affording very extensive views on each side. The valley of the Hudson was on one side, and the river itself was in full view for many miles, both above and below. On the other side was an inland valley, with farms, villages, groves of trees, and other features of rural scenery to be seen in every direc-

tion, scattered over it. The day was pleasant, and it would perhaps have been too warm, had it not been that the rays of the sun were in some degree shaded by a thin film of hazy clouds which were spread pretty evenly all over the sky. Around the sun itself there were faint traces of a halo.

"I think it is going to rain to-morrow," said John. "There is a halo round the sun."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle. "The halo is a reflection from those hazy clouds. I suppose that those must be snow clouds."

"Snow clouds!" exclaimed John. "How can there be snow clouds such a warm summer's day as this?"

"It is warm here, near the ground," said Mrs. Morelle, "but it is always cold at great heights, in the sky. Mountains that extend up ten or twelve thousand feet in the air have snow upon them all the time, that never melts. It is very cold on their summits, even in the hottest summer days.

"And so," continued Mrs. Morelle, "when people go up in balloons, although it may be very hot when they leave the earth, they always find it growing cold very rapidly as they ascend, and long before they get up as high as those clouds, it is freezing cold for them. So I sup-

pose that when clouds are formed at such a great height, they must be always snow clouds.

"Besides," continued Mrs. Morelle, "I have heard that they can tell by the size of a halo round the sun, whether it is formed by the reflection of the light from rain particles, or snow particles. The reflection is different; that is, the angle is different. But I do not understand it very well. When you grow bigger, John, and study optics, then you will understand it, I suppose, and then you will explain it to me."

"Yes, mother, I will," said John.

"And now look up at those feathery clouds. See how high they are! They are formed, I suppose, of millions of little glittering spangles of snow, condensed from the moisture which is in the atmosphere around them. If the moisture had been condensed lower down, at a place where the air is warmer, it would have formed itself into minute little globules of liquid water, like those in the vapor that came out from the tea-kettle, and that would have made a rain cloud in a stratum not so high up as the snow clouds.

"Sometimes," continued Mrs. Morelle, "in a pleasant summer's day, we see two kinds of clouds in the sky, rain clouds below, and snow clouds above. It is curious how many different

forms water can assume, or rather, the substance that composes water, for we do not call it water unless it is in its liquid form. It may be in that liquid form, either in a large quantity together, or in little globules forming water, or fog, or snow ;—or it may be in form of steam, which is transparent and clear like the liquid water, only it is a gas and very hot ;—or it may be dissolved in the air and mixed with it everywhere, just as sugar may be dissolved in a glass of water, and diffused everywhere through it ;—or it may be in the form of ice, solid.”

“Or snow,” said Florence.

“That is the same thing,” said her mother. “Snow is ice, in fact. If you were to examine a flake of snow with a microscope, you would find it to be nothing but a fine crystal of ice. So you see there are four forms of the same substance ; ice, water, steam, and moisture. We call it moisture when it is spread over or through any other substance. These four, ice, water, steam, and moisture, are all the same substance in different forms, and it is unfortunate that we have not some one word to denote them all.”

“There is a word,” said John ; “at least, so Grimkie says. He says his professor told him in a lecture that the name was *aqua*. The profes-

sor told them that aqua was a scientific name for water, in all its forms."

"How came he to tell you that?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"I do not know exactly," said John. "He was telling me about the lecture, and about some of the professor's experiments. He said that water was *aqua liquida*, and there were some other hard names that I do not remember. I forget what he said steam was. It was aqua something."

"Yes," said Florence. "And he said that a locomotive going along a railroad was driven by aqua, in the form of steam, so that drawing the train was truly an *aquatic* performance, notwithstanding that the work was done on dry land."

CHAPTER XV.

THE FARM.

AFTER going on for about two miles along the great Albany road, on the high land referred to in last chapter, the party came to a place where a branch road turned off to the eastward, and descended into the inland valley which has already been spoken of. After descending for some distance the road turned again, and followed the banks of a large stream which flowed through the valley. There were mills and manufactories of various sorts built along this stream, and now and then a small village. The road was shady and cool, and very pleasant, and the carriage went on over it smoothly, and in a very agreeable manner to all who were riding in it.

After proceeding in this manner for two or three miles up the valley, the party came in sight of a red gate by the side of the road, at some distance before them.

"I see the gate," said John, as soon as the gate came into view.

On arriving at the gate, John put the reins in-

to his mother's hands, and got down from the carriage to open it. When the gate was opened, Mrs. Morelle drove the carriage through. John held the gate open till the carriage had passed and then shut it again. His mother, after having driven through, stopped the carriage to wait for him.

As soon as John had got into the carriage, he drove on ; he very soon came to a bridge which led across the stream. As the carriage passed over the bridge, John looked over the railing down into the water to see if he could see any fishes, but he did not see any.

After going on a short distance by a winding road, along the margin of a wood, the party came in sight of the farm-house. The house stood by itself in a retired but very pleasant situation, with pretty yards about it, and large barns and sheds near. Across the way from the farm-house was a large field, where several men were employed in making hay. The grass had been cut down in the morning, and now the haymakers were turning it over to dry in the sun.

John drove up into a large yard by the side of the farm-house, and a very short man, who appeared to be somewhat deformed, and whose face wore a sedate and indeed rather melancholy expression, came out of a barn near by to take the horses.

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to his mother's house and pulled down the
rings to open it. When the gate was open, the
Morelli drove the carriage through. When all
the gate open till the carriage had passed, he
shut it again. His mother's carriage drove
through, stopped the carriage to wait for him.

As soon as the carriage had gone, the carriage
drove on, the very same as a horse-drawn
led across the stream. As the carriage passed
over the bridge, John looked over the side
down into the water, where he could see many
fishes, but he did not see any.

After going on a short distance by a wide
road, along the margin of a small stream
in sight of the farm-house. The carriage
itself was a refined but very plain carriage,
pretty much about it, and he was a little
near. Across the way lay a house
a large field, where some one was
is making hay. The carriage was
the morning, and he was a little

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"Ah, Crick," said John, "how do you do?"

The man's name was really Crickery, but people, in addressing him, usually shortened it to Crick. He nodded in answer to John's salutation, but did not speak. He, however, advanced to the horses, and took them by the bridle, while John descended from the carriage and then helped his mother and the children to get down. Mrs. Morelle, before she left the carriage, took out a book from one of the pockets of it—a book which she had taken the precaution to put there before she left home. She held this book in one hand, while she gave the other to John that he might help her to get down.

"Now, children," said she, looking at her watch, "we can stay here two hours. I am going into the house to read and to amuse myself as I like. You can do what you please, only be ready here in about two hours to set out for home. Be polite and kind to each other, and take care to do nothing wrong. If there is any thing that seems doubtful to you, and you do not know certainly whether it is right or not, it will be safer to consider it wrong."

So saying, Mrs. Morelle went away into the house.

"Now, Crick," said John, "how is it about fishing? Have you any lines?"

"Plenty of them," said the man.

"Then I am going a fishing," said John. "I can have an hour and a half for it, at the least calculation."

"Oh no, John!" said Florence. "We want to go and get some strawberries so as to have some strawberries and cream. Go with us—do."

Florence said this in quite a supplicating tone, and Jane, though she said nothing, looked at John with an expression of countenance which denoted that she earnestly hoped he would go with them.

"No," said John, "I had rather go a fishing. I have not been a fishing here for a long time. You and Jane can go and get strawberries by yourselves."

"But, John," said Jane, "I am sure that it is not polite for you to go away a fishing, and leave us by ourselves, when we all came on this expedition together. You ought to keep with us. Mother said that we must all be polite and kind to each other."

John paused a moment and seemed to be thinking what to do.

"I'm *sure* it is not polite for you to go away a fishing and leave us to ourselves," said Florence, speaking very positively.

"I do not think it would be very polite my self," said John, "so, on the whole, I will go

with you strawberrying. Besides, I believe I would rather have the strawberries and cream than to catch the fishes, after all."

In the meantime Mr. Crickery had taken the horses and the carriage into a large barn, in order to put the horses up. The children then went into the house to get some baskets, and to inquire where it would be best for them to go to find the strawberries the thickest.

A girl in the house, named Angelina, gave them some baskets, and then said that she would go and show them the way to the part of the strawberry field where the berries were the thickest.

The strawberries on this farm, as usual in such places in the neighborhood of New York, were cultivated in rows, in a great field. The rows were very long, and the strawberries which grew in them were very thick. They were gathered, however, to send to market every few days, certain rows being taken one day, and certain others the next, and so on through the whole field. Angelina conducted the children to the part of the field where the strawberries had not been gathered for several days, and they found them very thick. They were large, too, and very ripe and sweet.

The children soon filled their baskets, and

then they returned to the house. When they arrived there, they carried their baskets, with the berries in them, to a place behind the house where there was a table in a shady place near the garden gate, and some seats near it. They put their baskets on the table, and presently Angelina brought them out some saucers and spoons, and also a pitcher full of cream. The strawberries were so sweet themselves that they did not need any sugar.

Before eating any of the strawberries, the children filled a saucer heaping full, by a joint contribution from all their baskets, and sent it in for Mrs. Morelle. They could see her sitting in a rocking-chair, at a pleasant window in a back chamber, reading. Jane asked Florence to let her carry the strawberries up to Mrs. Morelle, and Florence consented. When Mrs. Morelle received them, she looked out at the window and said that she was very much obliged to the children for remembering to send some to her, and that she should like them very much. Jane then came back, and the children proceeded to eat their own strawberries together at the table by the garden gate. They had enough in their baskets to make two saucers full apiece, and plenty of very rich cream.

Soon after the children had finished their re-

past, and while they were talking and laughing together in a very joyous manner, their mother came down to join them. She had her bonnet on.

"Why, mother!" said Florence, "is it time for us to go?"

"Pretty nearly," said her mother. "At any rate, if you have not any thing to do here, we might get into the carriage, and set out on our return; and if we find we have time, we can go a round-about way, and so have a longer ride going home."

"We should like that very much, mother," said John. "I will go and tell Crick to get out the horses."

"I would call him by his full name," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is always best for boys to address everybody, however humble their station in life, in a respectful manner."

"Why, mother," said John, "it is impossible to address a man respectfully with such a ridiculous name as Crickery."

"His name does not sound ridiculous to him, you may be sure," said Mrs. Morelle. "Nobody's name sounds ridiculous to himself. Poor man. He is deformed, and I suppose he thinks that everybody looks down upon him, and despises him. How sad and sorrowful he looks. I pre-

sume there is nobody to whom it would give more pleasure to be spoken to and treated respectfully than he."

"Well, mother, then I'll call him Mr. Crickery," said John, "and I'll see if he don't laugh."

So John went and asked Mr. Crickery to put the horses to the carriage, and when the carriage was ready, John got in and drove to the door of the house where his mother and the two girls were waiting for him. They all then got in, and John was just about setting off, when suddenly he stopped and exclaimed,

"Dear me! I came very near forgetting all about the auger."

So he descended from the carriage, and began feeling under the front seat for a piece of one of the broom handles which he had taken the precaution to saw off of the length proper for one of the rounds of the ladder, and to put into the carriage, in order that he might have a measure of the size of the auger that he required.

"I'll run to the shop and get it," said he. "But you will have to wait a few minutes, for I must bore a hole with the auger first, in a piece of wood, and try my ladder round in it, to be sure that it will fit."

"Very well," said his mother; "take as much time as you require. We will wait."

In a few minutes, John came running back from the shop, bringing his stick in one hand, and an auger in the other. He put both articles in the carriage under the seat, and then getting in, he took the reins from his mother's hand, bade Mr. Crickery good bye, and the party set out on their return home.

Something quite like a smile of satisfaction and pleasure appeared on poor Crickery's countenance when he responded to John's good bye. The smile, it is true, was very faint and feeble, but it was enough to make John glad that he had addressed him respectfully, and by his proper name.

CHAPTER XVI.

BRIGHT ABOUT SOME THINGS.

WHEN the carriage stopped at Mrs. Dressler's to leave Jane, Florence proposed to her mother to allow her to get out too, and remain and make Jennie a visit.

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle.

"And let her stay till after tea," said Jane.

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle.

Mrs. Morelle always answered the children promptly in one way or the other, on such occasions. It was either you may, or you may not, and the first answer was always decisive. She never spoke at first doubtfully, and then afterward allowed herself to be persuaded by the children's solicitations. If she had doubts,—as of course she often would have,—she kept them to herself, and was silent, until she had considered the question, and had decided.

"And let John come, too," said Jane; "Charlie wants to see him."

"No," said John, "I can not stop very well

to-day. Besides, it would not do for me to leave mother to go home alone."

Mrs. Dressler's house was a very large and handsome mansion, standing back from the road, among the trees. There was a gate in front of it, and a straight walk which led from the gate between two borders of flowers, up through the front yard. John stopped at this gate and gave the reins to his mother, while he got out himself and opened the carriage door, in order to allow Florence and Jane to get out.

"Step down gently," said he. "Never jump."

Florence, who came first, stepped down gently, but Jane, who was not much accustomed to obey instructions of this kind, concluded to give a jump. The consequence was that her dress caught upon the step, and she was hung by it there, as it were, until John contrived to unfasten it in some way, and set her free.

"There!" said John. "You ought not to jump. You ought to mind what Grimkie says."

"What does he say?" asked Florence.

"He says that agility is a fine thing in a young lady, and there are proper times and ways for showing it, but jumping out of a carriage is just the worst time and way you can choose."

Jane laughed, and opening the gate, she passed

through, and ran up the walk with Florence toward the house.

John mounted to his seat again, and drove his mother home.

Jane took Florence through a spacious hall, which was richly ornamented with paintings and sculpture, to a back room in the rear of the house. Here she took off her bonnet and shawl, and put them on a shelf in a closet, and Florence did the same. The room was a very pretty one, and it was handsomely furnished. There were two windows in it which opened down to the floor. They led to a piazza, and from the piazza to a very pretty yard, which was so green and shady that it was a pleasure to look at it at any time, and especially on a warm summer's day.

"I want you to see my bird," said Jane. "He is out upon the piazza. Come!"

Florence followed Jane out to the piazza, and there, between two pillars, they saw the cage hanging.

"I will get the steps and take the cage down," said Jane.

So she went into the room again, and soon returned, bringing a curious set of library steps, which could be folded up so as to make a little table, or unfolded so as to make a step-ladder.

Jane unfolded this contrivance and placed it near where the cage was hanging, and then, while Florence steadied it by taking hold below, she ascended and took down the cage.

Jane set the cage down upon the floor of the piazza until she had folded up the step-ladder so as to make a table of it, and then she put the cage upon the table, where she and Florence could look into the cage conveniently, and see the bird. It was a beautiful little bird, of a delicate yellow color.

"See!" said Jane, "what a cunning little beak!"

"Yes, and what roguish-looking eyes!" added Florence.

"He knows me," said Jane, "as well as you do. And he knows a great deal besides. He is the most knowing little thing I ever saw. I am going to have a little wagon on a slope for him to pull up by a string when he wants some seed. I can teach him to do it very easily."

"Do you suppose he likes to be shut up so all the time in a cage?" asked Florence.

"Oh! yes," said Jane, "he likes it very much. If I were to open the door and let him fly out, he would come back again of his own accord, after a little while."

"Then why don't you do it?" asked Florence.

"I am afraid the cat would catch him," said Jane. "Silly little thing! He would not know any better than to stand still on the piazza floor, or on the grass in the yard, and let the cat come and catch him, and eat him up."

"Then he does not seem to be so very knowing, after all," said Florence.

"Not about such things as that," said Jane. "He is very knowing about some things. But I could not trust him near a cat. He is knowing enough about some things, but about other things, he does not seem to have any sense at all. Mother says that he is just like Charlie and me."

"How so?" asked Florence.

"Why, she says that in some things we are bright children enough, but about other things we are the stupidest little ninnies she ever saw."

"What made her say that?" asked Florence. "Was it some particular piece of foolishness that you did?"

"Yes," replied Jane, "I wanted a flower-pot with a flower in it, up in my chamber, to keep in the window. So I found a flower-pot, and Charlie went with me out into the garden, and helped me to dig up a flower to put in it."

"What flower was it?" asked Florence.

"It was a little moss-rose bush," said Jane.

"It had one full-blown rose upon it, and one half-blown. Then besides there were three buds."

"I should like such a moss-rose bush as that," said Florence.

"It was a little beauty," said Jane. "Well, we dug it up, and put it into the flower-pot, though we had to break off almost all the roots, because the flower-pot was too small for it—or rather the roots were too big. Then we carried it up stairs to my chamber, and I tried to put it on the window sill, but it would not stand there, and so Charlie said that he would make a shelf for it."

"*He* could not make a shelf for it," said Florence.

"He said he could," said Jane, "so we went to work. He contrived the plan, and I helped him in the work. We opened the blinds a little way and then put a ruler across from one blind to the other. The ends of the ruler came on the lower bars of the blinds on each side, just under the lower slat. Then we laid a good large flat book across from the sill of the window to the ruler, and that made the shelf. The book that we took was an atlas."

"That was an ingenious way," said Florence.

"Yes," replied Jane, "it was pretty ingenious,

and the shelf was pretty strong, and it bore the flower-pot very well, and the sun shone on the rose bush beautifully. It would have been a very good plan if the blinds would only have kept in their places—open just far enough for the ends of the ruler to reach them. They did stay so for some time, but by and by a little puff of wind came and blew one of the blinds open too far, and the ruler slipped off, and down went the atlas, the flower-pot, and all, right through a glass of mother's conservatory which happened to be just below. It went right through the glass and broke down one of mother's prettiest flowers."

"And that is what made your mother say you were stupid little things," said Florence.

"Yes," said Jane, "she said that we were bright enough in contriving ways to get things when we wanted them, but in regard to keeping out of mischief we were the stupidest little fools that she ever knew."

CHAPTER XVII.

A CONVERSATION.

WHILE Jane and Florence were talking in this manner on the piazza, seated on the step which descended to it from the room, and occupied with chirping and calling to the canary bird in the intervals of their talk, Mrs. Dressler came into the little room, and seeing the children seated there, she came to the place to speak to them. Mrs. Dressler was a kind-hearted lady, and Florence liked her very much.

"Well, Florence," said she, "did you have a pleasant time going to the farm?"

"Yes, Mrs. Dressler," said Florence, "we had a very pleasant time indeed."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Mrs. Dressler, "for inviting Jane to go. She likes to go with you very much."

"We shall go again in a few days," said Florence, "for John has borrowed an auger and he will have to go to the farm again pretty soon, to carry it back."

"It seems to me that that is rather a round-

about way of getting an auger," said Mrs. Dressler.

"So it is," said Florence, "but mother says she wishes to take a ride every two or three days, and she always likes to have an errand when she goes, and so she does not care how many errands we make her."

"And do you study at home now every day, instead of going to school?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

Florence replied that they did study at home, and Mrs. Dressler then proceeded to ask her a number of questions about the course which their mother pursued with them. Among other questions, she asked whether their mother never excused them from their studies, when they particularly wished to do something else.

"We never ask her to excuse us," said Florence.

"Never ask her!" said Mrs. Dressler. "I should think you would ask her very often."

"It is against the rule to ask her," replied Florence. "Besides, we know it would not do any good if we should ask her. She excuses us sometimes when she forms a plan herself for taking us away somewhere; but she never allows us to form any plans at all to interfere with study hours."

"That is an excellent rule," said Mrs. Dressler, "but I do not think I could get along with such a rule at all. The children would be all the time teasing me to excuse them 'just for this once.' I should be obliged to let them off continually, or I should not have any peace.

"However," continued Mrs. Dressler, "it would not be much worse in that case than it is now, for they are continually teasing me to let them stay at home from school. I do not believe that they go to school one half of the time."

"Oh, mother!" exclaimed Jane.

"How many times have you been to school this week?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

"This week?" said Jane. "Why this week is different—but we went Tuesday."

"Yes, Tuesday, and to-day is Friday," replied Mrs. Dressler. "However, I do not think that they lose much, for they learn very little at school, I find, except rude manners and vulgar words."

"Then why do n't you have a school for them at home, Aunt Jane," asked Florence, "as my mother does for us?"

"I am going to," said Mrs. Dressler. "At least I am seriously thinking of it. I am coming some day to ask your mother particularly how she manages it. Does she expect always to teach

you at home, without ever sending you to school at all?"

"Oh, no indeed," said Florence; "we are going to school by and by. Mother says she likes to teach us, and she is going to teach us all she can. She says that she can teach us to read and write and spell, and to add and subtract and multiply, but after we have learnt all these things well we are going to school."

"Would not you rather go to school now?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

Florence shook her head. "If we went to school," said she, "we should have to stay three hours in the forenoon and three in the afternoon. That would make six hours. But now we only have to stay one hour in the forenoon and one in the afternoon, and we have all the rest of the time to play."

"Then you like play better than study, after all," said Mrs. Dressler.

"Certainly we do," said Florence. "John does, especially, and so do I."

"It is very curious," said Mrs. Dressler, after a short pause, "that by only studying two hours a day, you learn faster than my children, who go to school six hours. You can write better than Jennie can, and as to Arithmetic, she does not know any thing about it at all."

"Oh, Auntie !" exclaimed Florence.

Mrs. Dressler was not really Florence's aunt, but she often called her Aunt Jane, and Auntie. The families were very intimate with each other, and Mrs. Dressler and Mrs. Morelle felt toward each other like sisters. Before they were married, they had been at school together a great many years, and the friendship which had then been formed had gone on strengthening itself ever since.

"I think, too, that you can read better than Jane or Charlie," said Mrs. Dressler. "They don't like to read at all."

"We read every afternoon," said Florence. "We read aloud to mother for half an hour."

"What do you read ?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

"It is generally a story book," said Florence. "First John reads a chapter, and then I read one. After that we have a half an hour to do any thing we please."

"And, of course, you run off at once to play," said Mrs. Dressler.

"Oh, no," replied Florence, "we can not go out to play. We must do something at our little studies or at the table. We can draw, or paint, or gum pictures into our scrap-books, or make little portfolios and pocket-books out of colored paper, or any thing else like that. Only,

we must stay in the octagon room all the time, and be pretty still. Johnnie is making a balloon."

"A balloon," exclaimed Mrs. Dressler.

"Yes, a little pink balloon," said Florence. "Grimkie told him how to do it. Grimkie found out in an encyclopedia, and made him a pattern. Johnny cuts the pieces out of tissue paper, and when he has got them all cut out he is going to paste them together at the edges, and that will make the whole thing come out in the shape of a great ball, with an opening in the bottom to let the hot air in."

"What is the hot air for?" asked Jane.

"Why it is the hot air that makes the balloon go up," said Florence. "Grimkie says that he is going to take a sponge, when the balloon is done, and dip it in brandy, and hang it up under the opening of the balloon, and then set it on fire. The heat from the fire will rise up into the balloon and fill it with hot air, and that will make the balloon go up."

"Why should the hot air make the balloon go up?" asked Jane.

"I do not know," said Florence, musing as she said so, as if she had never thought of that question before.

"Because it is rarefied," said Mrs. Dressler.

"The hot air is rarefied, and so it must go up, and it takes the balloon with it."

This explanation was not very satisfactory to either of the children. Indeed, they were rather puzzled than enlightened by it, and, as is usual, when children do not understand a pretended explanation which is given them, they remained silent.

Not long after this, tea time came, and after tea Florence went home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BALL RECOVERED.

THE plan of making a ladder to get down the India rubber ball, which had lodged under the eaves of the shed, unfortunately failed of being brought to a successful termination. The reason was, that though the plan, under Mrs. Morelle's guidance, and with her assistance, was quite scientifically formed, the children did not go systematically to work in the execution of it. They went on systematically, it is true, so far as to collect together the materials and tools, but when they came to begin the work, they soon ran off the track, as the railroad people say, in a very disastrous manner.

In the first place, John was so much pleased with having got an auger, and with the bright and penetrating look of the little screw that tipped the end of it, and of the sharp cutting wings which extended on each side, that he was very impatient to try the instrument.

"I may just as well bore the holes first," said he to himself—"a row of them on each side—

and then saw the board in two afterwards, as to saw the board first, and then bore the holes."

So he laid one end of the board across a log, and began to bore a hole in one side of it, near the end.

He succeeded very well indeed. The auger bored the hole nicely.

"Now," said John, "I'll bore another hole. It must be a foot from the first one, but it is not necessary to have it exactly a foot. I can step up a little higher than that, or not so high. It does not matter much precisely how high it is."

So he made a guess for the distance, and then began to bore another hole. After he had bored it he found that it was not in a line with the other, but was a little nearer the edge of the board.

"See," said Florence, "you have not got it even."

"That is no matter," said John. "That is near enough."

In fact, John was deviating entirely from the course that his mother had planned for him. The plan which she had made was this. First, he was to take a twine and a piece of chalk, and with it to make a chalk line up through the center of the board. In making this line, he was to do as carpenters do in such cases,—first fasten-

ing one end of the line exactly in the middle of the board at one end, by means of a little nail driven in there through a loop of the string, and then drawing the string to the other end of the board, chalking it all along its length. He was then to hold the farther end of the string exactly at the middle of the farther end of the board. Then, by drawing the string tight and snapping it, he would have a chalk-line on the board running exactly through the middle of it. This would show him where he was to saw.

He was next to lay the board down upon the edge of the platform, with nearly one half of it upon the platform, and the other part projecting over the edge. Then Florence was to stand upon the board over the platform, in order to keep it in its place while John was sawing it. John was to take his stand on the ground below, and, beginning at one end, was to saw carefully and slowly through to the other end. His mother warned him that this would be a very slow and tedious proceeding, and that, unless he went on very moderately with it, and stopped often to rest, he would get completely tired and out of patience before he got through with it.

"You had better allow two days for this sawing," said she. "I do not mean two whole days, but two days of your work. Begin one day and

saw half the length, and then feel satisfied for that day, and put the work away. Then the next day you can finish it."

After he had sawed the board in two, John was to lay the two strips—one exactly over the other—upon another board, which was previously to be laid upon the grass. Then he was to draw another chalk-line upon the topmost strip, from one end of it to the other, just as he had done upon the whole board. The object of this was to get a straight line exactly in the middle of the strip for the row of holes. Then he was to measure the distances of the holes apart, along this line, and mark the places with a piece of chalk. Then he was to bore the holes, one after another, along this line, precisely at the points marked. He was to bore through both the strips, and, to make sure of their going through, he was to go a little way into the board below. By this mode of procedure, he would not only get two holes made by one boring, but he would make it sure that the two holes in each pair,—one in one strip, and one in the other, would be exactly opposite to each other.

If John had gone on in this way, he would have proceeded systematically, and it is very likely that he would have succeeded in making a

ladder, by which he could have recovered his ball. But now he was so impatient to try the auger that he could not wait for the sawing, and so he began to bore at once, and almost at random, in the side of the board.

After making two or three holes, John found that his desire to bore was beginning to be satisfied. It was satisfied all the sooner from the fact that he could not but observe that he was not boring his holes well.

"After all, Florence," said he, "I think I'll saw the board in two first, according to the plan we made beforehand. That will be much better."

So he proceeded to carry the board to the platform, and to lay it there upon the edge of the platform, with one half of the breadth of it projecting over the edge, as his mother had directed. He then brought the saw, and prepared to begin the sawing.

"But you have not made the chalk-line yet," said Florence.

"No," said John, looking with a somewhat perplexed air upon the board. "No, I have not made any chalk-line, and I don't really think it is necessary. I can see where the middle of the board is, near enough. At any rate, I will begin so, and if I find that I can not go straight, then I will stop and make a chalk-line."

So John began to saw. Florence stood upon the part of the board which lay upon the platform, to keep it steady. John sawed a little while, but he soon began to work in a hurried manner. This was caused by a sort of feeling he had that he was not going on quite right. It is singular that the feeling that we are not going on well, often makes us hurry on more rapidly, in order to get through as soon as possible with what is unsatisfactory to us. Of course, he soon became tired. Sawing is a work that, of all others, will not bear hurrying.

"Florence," said he at length, stopping from his work, and looking up at Florence as she stood upon the board, "I wonder why I could not split this board with an ax, instead of sawing it. That would save me a great deal of trouble."

"If you split it with an ax, the edges will not be straight," said Florence.

"I can hew them straight afterwards," said John. "I mean to try the plan of splitting the board."

So John took the board up from the platform, and carrying it toward the opening into the shed, he placed it across a log that was lying there, and then took the ax to split it. He tried to drive the ax first into the cleft made with the

saw, but instead of entering the cleft, the edge of the ax struck about half an inch from it. He then tried again, and this time with somewhat better success, for he got nearer to the middle of the board, and made quite a long split. He then struck again, at the end of this split, for the purpose of carrying the fissure further. But instead of going straight along through the middle of the board, as John had hoped, the split turned and ran off to one side, thus completely spoiling one of his strips, and leaving the other in a shape entirely unmanageable.

John looked upon his work with dismay.

"It is of no use trying to do it with an ax," said he. "I ought to have sawed it. But never mind. This board is spoiled, but we can easily get another, and to-morrow I will get one and begin again."

John was however spared the labor of beginning his work again, for that evening, after tea, when he had been playing in the yard with Florence half an hour, while his mother was in the octagon room, she saw him suddenly appear at the window with his ball in his hand.

"Mother," said he, "see!"

"What is it?" asked his mother.

"My ball," said John.

"How did you get it?" asked his mother

"Grimkie got it for me," said he. "He just went by here with his fishing pole, and he made me kneel down on a chair on the platform, and then he climbed upon me, and stood on my shoulders, and so reached up with his fishing pole, and threw a loop of his line over the ball, and so pulled it down."

"Well," said his mother, "then you have nothing more to do about the ladder."

"No, mother," said John, "nothing, but to carry the auger home again to the farm."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BALLOON.

JOHN proceeded somewhat more systematically in making his balloon, than he did in respect to the ladder, and he accordingly came out better in the end. Grimkie had given him the pattern of what he called the *gores*. These gores were pointed at the two ends, and swelled out in the middle to a considerable breadth, so that when they were all pasted together, edge to edge, and then the whole opened and expanded, they would form a great ball about a yard in diameter.

What the precise shape of these gores must be, and how many of them would be required to make the balloon round, was a matter of calculation. Grimkie found the materials for this calculation in Bees' Cyclopedia, where there is the figure of a gore with all the dimensions marked, and rules for making a pattern of any size. Grimkie had cut out a pattern in stiff paper, and then he employed John and Florence to cut out the proper number of gores from some pink tissue paper

which he brought them for the purpose, and also told them how to gum the gores together by the edges, so as to make a balloon. He found all the directions in the cyclopedia, and he repeated them to Florence and John, charging them to proceed exactly according to his orders. He told them that if they did not go exactly according to his orders, that they would get their balloon "all in a muss."

The balloon was at length completed, and it went up very well. As a sponge soaked in brandy and all on fire was to go up with it, Mrs. Morelle was at first afraid that it might come down upon the house, and set the house on fire. So she made it a condition that the balloon was to be sent up from the edge of the bank, at some distance from the house, and at a time when the wind was in such a quarter as to blow directly toward the river.

"But then, mother," said John, "it might come down upon some of the steamboats or vessels, and set the sails on fire."

"I will take the risk of that danger," said Mrs. Morelle. "You may send it up at any time when the wind is east. Florence and I will see it from the observatory window."

"Could not you let Florence come with us on the ground?" asked John. "She can see it much better there."

"That would not be safe," replied Mrs. Morrelle. "There would be danger of setting her clothes on fire with the burning brandy. I expect that you and Grimkie will burn your faces and hands. But you can not burn them very seriously, so that will be of no consequence."

The arrangements were made in accordance with these suggestions, and the experiment succeeded very well. The balloon ascended splendidly, greatly to the admiration of a considerable number of children from the neighborhood, who were invited to witness it as spectators. While the preparations were making, the company, except those who were required to render assistance, kept at a safe distance on the lawn. Mrs. Morrelle and Florence looked out upon the scene from one of the windows of the observatory.

The balloon sailed majestically into the air, appearing to grow smaller and smaller as it ascended, till at length it appeared to be not more than half of its real size. All this time the brandy with which the sponge was filled continued to burn, and to throw up volumes of hot air into the cavity, and thus to keep the balloon lighter than the outer air. The balloon was in fact nothing more than a puff of hot and light air ascending into the atmosphere under a vast globular envelope of tissue paper.

I should rather say that it was the alcohol contained in the brandy that burned, and not the brandy itself, strictly speaking. Brandy consists essentially of alcohol and water, with some other substances in minute quantities to color and flavor it. All that will burn is the alcohol. So long as the alcohol lasted in Grimkie's sponge, the sponge continued to be enveloped in flame, and the hot air produced by it continued to ascend, and thus kept up the inflation.

The balloon sailed over the railroad track, and then passed on over the water. If instead of a sponge, there had been a little cage suspended from the balloon with a squirrel in it, he could have looked down and seen a sloop sailing far below him, and presently a sail-boat with two boys in it fishing.

"Hi-yo ! Tom," says one of the boys looking up, "somebody has been sending up a balloon."

"Hush !" says Tom. "Do n't speak a word ! I have got a nibble !"

After a while, when the alcohol of the balloon began to get exhausted, the flame grew more and more feeble, and finally it went out altogether, leaving only a wet and smoking sponge hanging to the wire. Still the balloon continued to go up, for the air which was contained in it was

not, and would of course remain so for some little time after the fire went out. The air, however, gradually grew cool, and then the balloon began slowly to descend. The boys had hoped that it would have gone across the river, so as to have fallen upon the land upon the other side.

"And then, perhaps," said John, "some boys might have found it there, and have sent it up again when the wind is the other way, and so it might have come back to us."

But the store of fuel for the fire contained in the sponge was not enough for so long a voyage. The balloon came gradually down, and at length fell into the water a little way beyond the middle of the river, and the children saw it no more.

CHAPTER XX.

THE STATE ROOMS.

FLORENCE and John slept in two little rooms not much bigger than state rooms on board a steamer or a ship. They called these rooms, in fact, their state rooms. The children liked steamers and ships, and often went on board them with their mother. That was the reason why they called their little rooms state rooms.

These rooms were just large enough to contain in each a small bed, a bureau, a washstand, a chair, and a small table. There was also room to stand and dress in them. They both opened very near each other into a larger room. There were no doors between the state rooms and the larger room, but only a sort of archway with curtains before it. The large room the children called the cabin. It was very prettily furnished, being supplied with every thing necessary for the comfort and enjoyment of the children. There was a fire-place in it, where there could be a fire in winter, and little bookcases, and two pretty tables, one at each window, and other such things.

There was only a thin partition between the two state rooms, and the beds of the children were placed against this partition, one on each side, so that the children could knock through to each other in the night, if any thing should happen. Besides, they could speak to each other very easily, for the state rooms being open toward the cabin except the curtains, the sound of their voices would pass round from one to the other perfectly well.

Their mother would often come up to their room, and sit there in a great arm chair, near the entrance to the two state rooms, and talk with the children, telling them stories, or giving them instruction or advice, after they had gone to bed. She always found that this was the best time for serious conversation with them of any kind, for their minds were then in a state of quiet and repose, whereas generally during the day they were preoccupied with schemes and excitements of one kind or another, so that then it was difficult for them to turn their thoughts to any subject requiring calm and serious attention.

One evening, when Mrs. Morelle was sitting in this way, talking with the children after they had gone to bed, she explained to them what she meant by applying a moral test to questions of conduct.

"You can not always tell what is right or wrong by reasoning about it," said she, "and we all have a test that we can apply, and so determine the question in that way.

"I will tell you how I mean. You remember the case the other day, when you were going to tell Grimkie something which was in itself strictly true, but which you were going to put in such a form as to deceive him."

"I was going to tell him, mother," said John, "that *you* were going to ride, but that *I* was going to work on my ladder."

"Yes ; that is, you were going to use words which might be understood in two senses. They were true in one of these senses, but you intended that he should understand them in the other."

"How in two senses ?" asked John.

"When you said that you were going to work upon your ladder," replied Mrs. Morelle, "the words might mean that you were going to work upon your ladder *instead* of going to ride, or they might mean that you were going to do it *after* going to ride. These are the two senses which the words might convey. They were true in the *last* sense, but you meant him to understand them in the other sense."

"No, mother," said John, "I did not care how

he understood what I said. He might understand it just as he liked."

"True," replied his mother, "but we will *suppose* that you meant him to understand that you were not going to ride, so that I may go on with explaining about prevarication."

"I believe I did mean him to understand it so, after all, mother," said John, in a subdued voice.

"Very well," said his mother. "Your admitting it helps me along very much in what I was going to say. Now the moral test is this. Imagine that you had met Grimkie, and had told him that, and he had been deceived by it, and had gone away, and you stood reflecting upon it a moment after he had gone, would there have been in your mind a little of an uncomfortable sort of feeling, a kind of half guilty feeling, as if you had done something that was not quite fair, and honorable, and right? The coming of that little unhappy feeling, if it had come, would be the proof that what you had done was wrong. It is conscience which produces this feeling. God has given us conscience for the test, and the disturbance of our peace of mind is the effect that it produces, to let us know that what we have done is wrong, like the cloudiness which the chemist produces in his glass, when he pours in

the test, and finds by the cloudiness that there is poison there.

“So you see, whenever you are thinking of doing any thing,” continued Mrs. Morelle, “and are not certain whether it is right or wrong, apply the test. Don’t undertake to decide the question by reasoning about it, for your reason will be very likely to deceive you. Apply the test—the test that God has given you. Imagine that you have done the thing, and then consider whether the thought of it would produce a little guilty feeling, a sense of dissatisfaction with yourself, a self-condemnation—or whether you would feel quiet, contented, and at peace, and ready to look the person in the face, and feel that you had acted in an open, upright, and honorable manner. That is the way for us to decide whether a thing is right or wrong.”

Mrs. Morelle then went on to explain that this test, like the chemist’s test, and all other tests, might sometimes fail by being of bad quality, or out of order, or by being wrongly applied. But when pure and in good order, it was infallible, she said. Persons might sometimes have a guilty feeling, or a feeling which would seem very much like that, when really they had not done any thing wrong, and they might possibly not have it when they had done wrong ; but in

such cases it would be because the test that God had given them, was in some way or other perverted, or changed from its natural and proper condition.

"But these cases," said she, "are, on the whole, very rare. The conscience is generally a very safe test. At any rate, it is the best one for you to go by. Whatever makes you have a guilty feeling in your heart after you have done it, you may be very sure is wrong. What does not make you have a guilty feeling in any degree, is right. That is the general rule. And it is altogether the safest rule for you to go by. It is a great deal better than any reasoning.

"For example, do you remember the other day, when you were playing tiger?"

"With Grimkie?" said John, sitting up suddenly in bed, and looking very much interested.

"Yes," replied his mother, "but lie down and keep quiet. You can talk just as well while you are lying down."

So John lay down again.

"You were hunting him among the trees, and shooting at him with arrows."

"Yes, mother," said John, "I was a savage, and Florence was my man. She came after me, and picked up my arrows."

"When you began the play," continued Mrs

Morelle, "you walked first along among the trees with your bow and one arrow, your man carrying the other arrows, and then, as soon as you caught sight of Grimkie, you called out to your man and said, 'See ! there goes a tiger !'"

"Yes, mother," said John, "and then I let fly an arrow at him, and hit him on the back. But it did not kill him. It only wounded him."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Morelle. "But what I want to tell you about, is the test. You said, 'There goes a tiger !' The question is whether you did right or wrong in saying that. Now I might reason about it and try to prove that you did wrong. I might reason in this way. It is wrong to say any thing that is not true. Now it was not true that Grimkie was a tiger. He was a boy. Therefore, you did wrong to say that there was a tiger going along. So you see that I might reason about it pretty plausibly, and come to the conclusion that it was wrong. I might perhaps reason about it in some other way, and try to make it out to be right.

"But if, instead of undertaking to reason about it, I should wish to decide the question by applying our test, then I should ask you whether you think that after saying in your play, 'There goes a tiger !' you should experi-

ence any thing like a guilty feeling in your heart—any secret dissatisfaction or discontent with yourself, as if you had done any thing wrong.”

“No, mother,” said John, raising himself up suddenly in his bed again, “not the least.”

“*I think you would not,*” said Mrs. Morelle. “I think no child could have that feeling in such a case, and, therefore, I think that however anybody may reason about it, it is not wrong. We apply the test, and the test shows that it is not wrong.

“But now,” continued Mrs. Morelle, “take the other case. After you had told Grimkie that you were going to work upon the ladder, intending him to understand by that that you were *not* going to ride, would you then have a sort of guilty feeling, as if you had done something not quite right?”

“Why, yes, mother,” said John, lying down again at the same time in his bed, “I do not know but that I should.”

“Then the test shows that that would be wrong,” said Mrs. Morelle, “notwithstanding your reasoning with Florence to prove it right. And it is better for children to depend on the test, rather than upon their reasoning.”

After talking with the children in this way for some time, Mrs. Morelle heard them say their

prayers, and then bade them good-night. Before she went, however, she said she wished to add one thing to what she had explained to them, in order to prevent them taking a wrong impression from it, and that was that she did not intend at all to condemn all reasoning about questions of right or wrong. Reasoning was often extremely useful, she said. By it, the conscience was enlightened, and the way was prepared for it to act more freely and impartially. But the conscience was the true *test*, after all, and children must always obey its voice.

"Whatever produces in your minds the guilty feeling," said she, "you may be pretty sure is wrong, whether you can see the reason why it is wrong or not."

It may perhaps be thought that the game alluded to in this conversation, of hunting Grimkie among the trees as if he were a tiger, and shooting arrows at him, would be rather dangerous sport, and it would have been so had it not been that the arrows were muffled. This idea of muffling the arrows was a contrivance of Grimkie himself.

The way he managed it was this. The arrows were made blunt in the first place, and then over the head of each Grimkie wound a little wad of

cotton, and then covered the cotton with a bit of washed leather, which was cut in a round form, and drawn around the head of the arrow over the cotton, and tied down around the neck of it. Grimkie took the idea from some boxing gloves that he saw in a shop window.

“If men can prevent their fists from hurting,” said he to himself when he saw the gloves, “by padding them with cotton wool, I do n’t see why boys can not do it with the heads of their arrows.”

So he padded the heads of John’s arrows in the way above described, and then they could play “*Hunt the Tiger*” in a very vigorous and real, and at the same time, in a very safe and harmless manner.

CHAPTER XXI.

PLAN FOR A SCHOOL.

CHARLIE and Jane often asked their mother to allow them to study at home, as Florence and John did, instead of sending them to school, and Mrs. Dressler at last resolved on making the experiment.

So she sent word one day by her man Julius, to the teacher of the school, that she was going to take her children away.

She found that they did not learn much, she said, and she was going to try and teach them at home. Accordingly, if the teacher would send her bill for the portion of the quarter during which they had attended, she would pay it.

The teacher sent back word that by the rules of her school, which were duly published in her prospectus, and which Mrs. Dressler had seen there before she sent the children to the school, no pupils were to be received for less than one quarter, and no deduction was to be made for absence, unless occasioned by sickness.

This Mrs. Dressler thought was very unrea-

sonable. She complained to Mrs. Morelle about it.

"It is very hard to pay for six week's instruction after the children have left the school entirely," said she. "Besides, while they belonged to the school they did not go one half the time, and so they did not get one half of what I shall have to pay for, even if I stop paying now. It seems to me that the teacher is very unreasonable."

"But if those are her rules," suggested Mrs. Morelle, "her printed rules."

"She ought not to have any such rules," replied Mrs. Dressler.

"However," continued Mrs. Dressler, "it is no great matter, after all. I suppose the teacher can not afford to lose it very well, so I will pay her the whole."

Mrs. Dressler did not mean to be unjust. Indeed, she was never knowingly unjust, though she was often inconsiderate. The truth was, that Charlie and Jane, by the extreme irregularity of their attendance at school, and the consequent confusion and difficulty which they made in their classes, had given the teacher more trouble than any other six scholars in the school.

"It is all because the teacher does not interest them in their studies," said Mrs. Dressler. "If

she had any genius for teaching, she would interest them in their studies, and then they would *like* to go to school."

Mrs. Dressler forgot that genius was very rare, and is not to be required or expected either of teachers, or of anybody else in the ordinary avocations of life. All that can be reasonably required of teachers is the exercise of such qualities as industry, fidelity and patience. They are not to be condemned for failing to exhibit the magic results which genius can sometimes produce.

Mrs. Dressler determined, however, that she would take the children away from school, and try the plan of teaching them at home. She told them of her determination one morning at breakfast, and they were both greatly pleased.

"And now, children," said she, "you must be good and not make me any trouble. I shall call you when the time comes, and you must come in immediately, and then I shall give you your lessons, and you must study them diligently by yourselves, without coming to ask me any questions, or interrupting me at all. Your Aunt Katie says that there is no need of children coming to ask questions at all in study hours."

It was not exactly this that Mrs. Morelle had said, though it was something a little like it. What she really said was, that a mother might

arrange the children's work beforehand, and anticipate and provide for all their wants in such a manner that there would be no occasion for them to come to her during study hours. Children, when they are studying, require attention, both in the way of instruction and of help ; but with a little system and foresight, the attention may all be rendered at a stated time, before the studies begin. If this is not done, then it must be distributed all through the time of study, as occasions for it arise. But it must be afforded either in one way or in the other. Children can not be expected to educate *themselves* entirely.

Having given the children these preliminary notifications, Mrs. Dressler let them go out to play after breakfast, saying to them that she would send for them when it was time for them to come in. At length, about nine o'clock, she sent Julius to call them. The room which she decided to use as their school-room was the small back parlor which opened out to the piazza, where Jennie kept her bird. Mrs. Dressler went to this room and made the necessary preparations.

There was a large table in the middle of the room with books and work upon it. Mrs. Dressler moved back the books and work so as to make a clear space on each side of the table. Thus

there were two places for study arranged, one for each of the children.

"I will put them on opposite sides of the table," said she, "and then they will not interfere with each other."

Mrs. Dressler then brought an inkstand and put it in the middle of the table.

"I'll put the inkstand in the middle," said she, "and then they can both reach it."

She then went to a certain closet in the entry where the children were accustomed to keep their school books, slates and satchels, in order to see what books there were there. She found two arithmetics, some cracked slates, two or three writing books partly filled, also two geographies and an atlas. The atlas was very much worn.

Mrs. Dressler brought out all these things, and put them upon the table, some on Charlie's side, and some on Jane's.

By this time Mrs. Dressler began to wonder why the children did not come in. Nearly ten minutes had elapsed since she had sent Julius for them and they did not appear.

So she went to the side of the fire-place, where a crimson bell-cord was hanging against the wall, and rang the bell. As soon as she had rung it she took her seat in a large and comfortable arm-

chair near the window, and drew up a small rose-wood work-table to her side.

In a moment the door opened and Julius appeared.

"Did you call the children, Julius?" said Mrs. Dressler.

"Yes, Mrs. Dressler," said Julius, "I told them you wished them to come in directly."

"And what did they say?" rejoined Mrs. Dressler.

"They said that they would come," replied Julius.

"What were they doing?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

"They were making a tent out of some pieces of matting which I spread out upon the grass."

"It was nearly ten minutes ago that you called them, was it not?" said Mrs. Dressler.

"I think it is rather more than that," said Julius.

"Then," said Mrs. Dressler, "I wish that you would go and call them again. Tell them that I want them to leave their play and come in immediately. And come back, Julius, and tell me what they say."

Julius bowed and disappeared. In a few minutes he came back again and reported that he had delivered the message to the children, and

that they said they were coming in in a very few minutes—just as soon as they had got their tent done.

“But, Julius,” said Mrs. Dressler, in a tone of great dissatisfaction, “they ought not to wait till they have finished their tent. They ought to come in immediately, when I send for them.”

Julius bowed.

“What is the reason that they do not obey me?” asked Mrs. Dressler, with a frown.

“I can’t say, madam, indeed,” replied Julius.

“I will wait a few minutes longer,” said Mrs. Dressler, “and then if they do not come I will go myself and know the reason why.”

Mrs. Dressler waited some minutes longer, and still the children did not come. At length she began to feel quite angry with them, and putting her work down in a pet, she went out to see what they were doing.

She found them at work under a tree, making a tent.

“Children,” said Mrs. Dressler in a very stern voice, “why do n’t you come in? I sent for you more than half an hour ago.”

“Oh no, mother,” said Jane, “it is only a very few minutes ago that you sent for us, and we are coming in now very soon. See! we are making a tent. We have got one end of the pole in the

branches of the tree, and we only want to contrive something to keep up the other end of it, and then we are going to put the matting over."

"But you must come in now," said Mrs. Dressler, "and finish your tent afterwards. It was time for you to begin your studies half an hour ago."

"But, mother," said Charles, in an entreating tone of voice, "all we want is to get our tent put up. We want to put it up before we come in, so that we can be all ready to begin to play as soon as we come out."

"But it will take too long," said his mother.

"Oh no, mother," said Charlie, "it will only take a very few minutes."

"Very well," said Mrs. Dressler. "But you must come in the very minute you get the tent done."

"Yes, mother, we will," said Jane.

So Mrs. Dressler left them and went into the house.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SCHOOL A FAILURE.

IN about twenty minutes after Mrs. Dressler went out to see the children, they came in. They came running into the room full of animation and gayety, and took their seats at the table where their mother had prepared places for them, one on one side of the table, and one on the other.

"Now, children," said she, "I want you to begin your studies at once. You may take the same lessons you would have had at school. You study arithmetic—and geography—do n't you?"

"Yes, mother," said John, "and writing and spelling."

"Well, you may go directly on where you left off in the same studies. Katie says that it is not best to make unnecessary changes. I have brought all your books, and put them on the table for you."

"I have not got any atlas," said Charles.

It was what was left of Charlie's atlas that had been used for making the shelf for the flower-pot

in Jane's chamber, and which had fallen with the flower-pot into the conservatory below. When the gardener came to clear away the fragments, he threw "the old book covers," as he called them, into his wheelbarrow, as a part of the rubbish, and wheeled it away.

"You had an atlas, Charles," said Mrs. Dressler. "What has become of it?"

"It is all used up," said Charles.

"Oh! Charles," said Mrs. Dressler, "how careless you are about your books. Well, you must use Jane's. You can cipher while she is studying geography, and then change, so that you can both use the same atlas.

"Then besides that, I shall want you to write."

Here Jane reached out her hand suddenly to the inkstand, which was in the middle of the table, and drew it over to her side.

Charles immediately raised himself up in his seat, and reaching away over the table, took hold of the inkstand and brought it over to *his* side.

"Children," said Mrs. Dressler, "what are you doing?"

"Why, mother," said Jane, "I can not reach the inkstand if he puts it away over on his side."

"No more can I reach it," retorted Charles, "if she puts it away over on her side."

"Let it stay in the middle, where I put it," said Mrs. Dressler, "and then you can both of you reach it."

So Mrs. Dressler replaced the inkstand in the middle of the table, and proceeded with her instructions.

"In arithmetic, you must begin where you left off," said she, "and go on in doing the sums. To-morrow morning, I will look them over and see if you have done them right. So now you may begin. And you must not come to me to ask me any questions at all. I shall be here at the window busy with my work, or else reading, and you must not speak to me. I will tell you when the hour is out."

"But, mother," said Charles, "how will you know? There is not any clock in this room."

"But I have my watch," said Mrs. Dressler, "and I can tell you by that."

"You must not forget to look at it, mother," said Charles. "Perhaps you had better take it out of your pocket, and put it on your table, where you can see it all the time."

Mrs. Dressler said that she would not forget, and so went away, leaving the children to their studies.

John thought that he would write first, so he

took his copy-book out, and laid it open on the table before him.

Jane, on the other hand, thought she would cipher first, so she took her arithmetic and slate. Charles, when he saw this, on the whole concluded that he would cipher too, and so he shut his writing-book, and took his slate, and then began feeling in his pocket for a pencil. Jane had a pencil tied to her slate by a string.

Charles could not find any pencil in his pocket, and so he called to his mother to say that he had no slate pencil, and to ask what he should do.

"But, Charles," said Mrs. Dressler, "I told you you were not to speak a word to me on any account whatever, until your study hour was over."

"But, mother," said Charles, "I have not any slate pencil, and what am I to do? I am sure that I can't cipher without a slate pencil."

"Then you must do something else," said Mrs. Dressler, "if you can not find any slate pencil. Feel in all your pockets."

"I have, mother," said John. "I have felt in every one."

"Then go and look in the closet," said Mrs. Dressler. "There may possibly be one there."

So Charles went out to the closet, and Jane, jumping out of her chair, ran with him to help

him look. They were gone some time, but at length they came back, saying that there was no slate pencil there.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Dressler, "what a plague! And all for want of a slate pencil! I wonder what Katie does when the children lose their slate pencils!"

"I know what Aunt Katie does," said Jane. "She buys a whole paper of slate pencils, and lets Bridget grind them all smooth, and sharpen them on the kitchen grindstone, and then she gives Florence and John a dozen apiece, and they keep them in a little box in their drawers."

"That is an excellent way," said Mrs. Dressler. "I wonder I did not think of it. I will adopt that plan myself, and this afternoon you shall go to the store and buy some pencils."

"Let us go now, mother," said Charles, with a very bright and animated look. "Let us go now—right away!"

"No," said his mother, "you must attend to your studies now. You can study geography while Jane is ciphering. And then she can lend you her slate and pencil while she is studying geography."

Charles begged that they might be allowed to go at once and get their slate pencils, and then, as he said, they could begin *right* with their

work, and go on regularly. But Mrs. Dressler was firm in her refusal.

"No," said she, shaking her head in a very decided manner, "no, children, I can not let you go now. You must positively go on with your studies. I have let you have your own way about such things a great deal too much. I am going to turn over a new leaf, and exercise more authority. You must positively go back to your seats, and go on with your studies."

"But, mother—" said Charles.

"No, Charles," said Mrs. Dressler, holding up her hand; "no, I can not hear another word about it. You *must* go back to your seats."

So the children went back to their seats. Jane appeared to be good-natured about it, but Charles looked somewhat sullen.

He took the geography and turned over the leaves until he found the right place. He then opened the atlas, and spread it out before him. Instead of beginning to study, however, he put his elbow upon the atlas, and resting his cheek upon his hand, began to wonder whether there was any way by which they could have a fire in their tent when they should get it done.

After sitting in this position for some minutes, until at length his arm began to be tired, he changed his posture, and happening to cast his

eyes upon Jane, who was busy at work doing a sum, it occurred to him that her pencil was long enough to be broken in two, and that, by making such a division of it, both might be supplied.

"Jane," said he, "your pencil is long enough for two. Let me have half of it, and then we can both cipher."

"No," said Jane.

"Do," said Charles, "and then we can both cipher."

"No," said Jane, "I like a good long slate pencil, and if I break a piece off from this, it will be too short."

"Ah! yes," said Charles, in a supplicating tone of voice, "do. If you will, I will make you a place to roast an apple by the fire in our tent."

"Children," said Mrs. Dressler, "you must not talk while you are studying."

"We can not have any fire in our tent," said Jane, speaking, however, in a comparatively low tone, by way of obedience to her mother's injunction that they must not talk.

"Yes, we can," said Charles, speaking in the same tone, "I have thought of a plan."

"Children," said Mrs. Dressler, "I said you must not talk."

"But, mother, we are talking very low," said Charles.

"That makes no difference," said his mother; "it prevents your studying just the same. I want you to go on with your studies."

"But, mother," said Charles, "it is about our studies that we are talking. Jane has got a long slate pencil, and I want her to break it in two to give me half."

"That will be a very good plan," said Mrs. Dressler, "if it is long enough. Is it long enough, Jane?"

"Remember," said Charles, in a whisper, "I will get you a nice flat stone to roast your apple upon."

"Yes," said Jane, "I suppose it will do."

"Then break a piece off, Charles," said Mrs. Dressler, "and as soon as you have done it, take your slate and go to work, and then do not let me hear another word from you till the hour is out."

Charles broke the pencil in two, and then went to work with the part which he had broken off for himself. But now Jane found that *she* could not work, for the end of her pencil, where Charles' part was broken off, was so blunt and ragged from the fracture that she could not make her figures at all. So she wanted to go and get

a knife to sharpen it. Charles told her that it was better to sharpen it on a stone. After some considerable conversation on this subject, Charles and Jane went out together to see what they could do with the pencil, in order to get it into working order, and it was a long time before they returned.

At length, however, they came back, and sat down to their work again, but in a very few minutes Charles went to his mother with his slate and his book, and asked her if she would be kind enough to show him "how to do this sum." This made another long talk, which occupied a great deal of time, and came to no satisfactory conclusion. Finally the slates were put away, and the children undertook to write ; but the ink in the inkstand was found to be nearly dried up, and there was none in the ink bottle to furnish a new supply. Then, there was only one pen that would write. Mrs. Dressler had taken the precaution to find two pens, and to put them on the table, so as to have them all ready, but one of them was found to have the point broken off, so that it would not write.

"I ought not to have been satisfied with two pens," said Mrs. Dressler. "I ought to have had half a dozen, I suppose, like Katie's supply of slate-pencils."

"Yes, mother," said Jane; "Auntie gives Florence and John a box of pens apiece, and three pen handles. I wish you would give Charlie and me a box."

"Yes, mother, let us go and buy them now," said Charles.

Mrs. Dressler finally concluded to let the children go and buy the pens and pencils, without waiting for the study hour to be over.

"We will not call this any thing to-day," said she. "We were not really ready. So we will let the studies go for to-day and begin all fresh to-morrow."

"Yes, mother," said Charles, "that will be the best plan. We will not call this any thing, but we will get all ready, and start fair to-morrow."

CHAPTER XXIII.

TOTALLY DISCOURAGED.

MRS. DRESSLER was a good deal disheartened by her first day's experiment in teaching her children at home, and after a few days longer trial of it, she became totally discouraged. Nothing went smoothly. Difficulties and perplexities were continually arising. The children would come so often and interrupt her with questions and petitions of one kind and another that she had no peace. Finally, she moved her chair out on the piazza, so that they could not speak to her. But this did not remedy the evil, for then they would leave their seats and come to her, notwithstanding she had strenuously forbidden them to do so. Every time they came she would reprove them for coming and renew her prohibition. Then, after considerable altercation, she would decide that she would answer "this once," but it should be the last time. If they came again, she should send them back, she said, without any answer.

One day, when Mrs. Morelle called to see her,

she told her she had been trying the experiment of teaching her children at home, but that she could not succeed in it at all.

“What is the difficulty, Jennie?” said she; “Charlie and Jane are so gentle and so docile that I should think it would be very easy to teach them.”

“The greatest trouble I have is with the arithmetic,” said Mrs. Dressler. “Charles can not do his sums, and he is continually coming with them to me to do them for him, and I can not do them any better than he can. It is not the same book that I studied when I was at school.”

“If the sums are too hard for him,” said Mrs. Morelle, “I should think it might be because he is too far along in the book. He probably does not understand all that comes before.”

“So I tell him,” replied Mrs. Dressler; “I have told him so fifty times, but he is not willing to go back.”

The fact is, that Charles, being left to choose for himself in what part of the book he would cipher, went as far forward as he could, without regard to the difficulty of the sums. He did not care how difficult they were, for the less he understood about them the better seemed to be his excuse for going to his mother with them. He greatly preferred standing by at his ease, while

his mother puzzled her head over a difficult sum, than remain in his seat, and work himself at doing the easier ones.

"How do you manage about arithmetic, Katie?" asked Mrs. Dressler.

"The children have two or three small arithmetics," said Mrs. Morelle, "and I require them to choose for their work such sums as they can do themselves. It is not important that they should go forward very fast into the difficulties of arithmetic. What they require at their age is a great deal of practice in adding, multiplying, subtracting, dividing, and other such simple operations. So all that I require is that they should show me every morning a slate full of neat, and tidy, and correct work, and as for the sums, they may take them wherever they please, in any of their arithmetics, provided they take sums that they can do themselves. They are not to take any that it is necessary to come and ask me about."

"That is an excellent plan," said Mrs. Dressler. "I will try that plan myself."

"Then every morning, when I look over their sums, I see about where they are in their arithmetical knowledge, and I give them every day some little instruction in advance, so as to carry them forward gradually in their general knowl-

edge of the subject. But their own work is almost wholly making themselves familiar, by practice, with what they have already learned."

"That is an excellent way," said Mrs. Dressler. "I will certainly adopt that plan."

But notwithstanding all Mrs. Dressler's efforts to adopt Mrs. Morelle's plans, for some reason or other she did not succeed. She could not get the children in at the appointed time. When they came too, at last, they always came unwillingly, and went reluctantly to their work. Thus they were very negligent and careless in what they did, and were idle a great portion of the time. Their mother found a good deal of fault with them, but this did not seem to make them any more attentive, or cause them to feel any greater interest in their work. Finally Mrs. Dressler gave up the effort, wholly discouraged, and sent the children back again to school.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A WILD SCHEME.

ONE day, early in September, John and Florence came in very eagerly to their mother, who was sitting at her work upon the piazza window, toward the latter part of the day, and said that they had got a plan.

"Is it a well-considered plan?" asked their mother.

"Yes, mother," said John, "we have considered it as well as we can, and we think it is an excellent plan."

The children then proceeded to explain their plan, which was, that they should get a large sail-boat, and take a sail up the river, to be gone three days.

"That is a plan indeed," said Mrs. Morelle. "And you say you have well considered it. I wonder if you have thought of the difficulties."

"Yes, mother," said John, "We have thought of all the difficulties. We can get a large sail-boat, with a cabin in it, for five dollars a day, and two sailors to navigate it. I'm to be the captain."

"It seems to me that I am to be the captain," said Mrs. Morelle.

"No, mother," said John, "you are to be the queen. You are a queen going to take a voyage in her yacht. I am to be the captain."

"And how about provisions?" said Mrs. Morelle.

"We will take provisions enough for one day in a great basket," said John. "When we get to West Point, we are to go ashore, and go up to the hotel, and to stay there two nights and one day. Then we are to go on board our boat again and come home."

"Would it not be better to go up by the railroad?" said Mrs. Morelle. "We can go up by the railroad to Garrison's landing, and then go across to West Point by the ferry."

"No, mother," said John, "it will be a great deal better for us to go in a sail-boat all by ourselves. You see we shall have more adventures. It is nothing to go up by the railroad. But by the sail-boat we shall see a great deal. Perhaps there will be a head wind, and we may be all day beating against it. Perhaps there will be a shower, and we shall have to go ashore at some pretty little country tavern among the Highlands."

"This is a strange idea that you have got," said Mrs. Morelle. "What put it into your head?"

"It was Grimkie that told me about it first," said John.

"I thought it must have been one of Grimkie's ideas," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is rather a wild scheme I think—still, I do not know but that it may be a very good one. Does Grimkie know where you can get a boat?"

"Yes, mother," said John, "he knows of an excellent one—strong and safe, and as nice as a pin."

After hearing all that John had to say about this plan, Mrs. Morelle said that she would consider the subject, and let him know the next day.

That evening Mrs. Morelle had a visit from Mrs. Dressler, and she told her about John's plan. Mrs. Dressler seemed quite amused while she was listening to it, and when Mrs. Morelle had finished her account of it, she laughed aloud.

"And is he really in earnest about it?" she asked.

"He seems to be perfectly in earnest," said Mrs. Morelle, "and Florence too, and I think very seriously of going."

"Why, Katie," said Mrs. Dressler, "I am amazed. You would be perfectly crazy to set out to go to West Point in a sail-boat with those children. You will be exposed to a thousand dangers. You will be liable to be capsized by

the squalls, and to be run down by the steam-boats. You will be pretty sure to run aground somewhere, and have to lie broiling in the sun six or eight hours, till the tide rises and floats you off."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "we run some risk of all these things, I know. But the risk is very small—very small indeed. All I have to do is to make sure of a thoroughly trustworthy man, to navigate the boat, and then I shall run very little risk of any thing but discomfort. And I may escape even that. It is possible that we may have a very pleasant and prosperous sail. And if we should not, John will acquire some experience and training which may be of great use to him hereafter, in knocking about the world. So, on the whole, I am strongly inclined to go."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE VOYAGE.

MRS. MORELLE decided to fall in with John's scheme for a sail up the river to West Point, as she usually did in similar cases, for what seemed to her very good reasons. "Boys, like John, who are in good health, and are gradually growing up to manhood," she said to herself, "feel a great desire to exercise their powers. There is a constant surplus of force which must be expended. This leads them into all sorts of enterprises, and we must do one of three things. We must keep them quiet and still at home, and so let them grow up great babies—or we must let them run loose by themselves, and so get into bad company and fall into evil ways—or lastly, we must join them in their schemes, and take part in them ourselves, and even incur some risk and some hardship occasionally, if it is necessary, in allowing them opportunities to exercise and develop their powers."

So Mrs. Morelle authorized John to go down to the landing on the bank of the river, and see

the boat which Grimkie had recommended, and ascertain the name of the man that owned it. John was very proud of this commission, and he executed it in a very creditable manner. Mrs. Morelle made some inquiries respecting the man, when John had reported his name to her, and finding that he was honest and trustworthy, and that his boat was stanch and safe, and that he was well skilled in the management of it, she told John that she approved his plan very much, and that she should like to have him take her and Florence up to West Point in that way.

"I shall depend upon you to make all the arrangements," said she, "and I shall have nothing to do with them. I shall amuse myself on the voyage with my books and my work, and whatever you and Florence want, you must provide for yourselves."

"Very well, mother, we will," said John.

"Only there is one thing we must not forget," said Mrs. Morelle. "That, as this is your plan for an excursion, and not mine, it must not interfere with your studies. You must take your books, and you must have an hour of study every forenoon, and every afternoon, while we are gone."

John agreed to this condition without any hesititation, and so it was decided to carry the

plan into effect. Mrs. Morelle also made one other condition, and that was, that they were not to set out on the proposed voyage until some morning when the barometer should be at or above thirty.

"No matter about the thermometer," said she, "for we do not care how cool it is, but we will not set out when there is danger of a storm. So we will watch the barometer, and set out when the wind is west, and the barometer high. We shall then be almost absolutely certain of pleasant weather."

It so happened that the wind was right and the barometer high the very next morning. The children got up before sunrise to look at the instrument, and to observe the weather. At breakfast time, their mother decided to go, and John was sent down to the landing immediately after breakfast, to tell the boatman that the party were going that day, and that he must have the boat ready at ten o'clock. John also called at the stable to order a carriage to be sent up to take his mother and Florence down.

The carriage came at half-past nine o'clock. John had a large basket of provisions prepared, which he put into the carriage as soon as it came to the door. Very soon afterward, his mother and Florence came and got in, and immediately

afterward the carriage set off and took them down to the landing. They found the boat all ready. The boatman was there, and his son, a boy of about twelve years old, who was going to help his father navigate the boat.

The whole party immediately went on board. The boatman pushed the boat off and hoisted his sails. The wind, which was blowing a gentle summer breeze toward the land, at once filled the sails, and the boat began to draw off from the shore.

"This is very curious, mother," said Florence. "The wind blows toward the shore, but it blows the boat away from it."

"Yes," replied her mother, "it is quite curious that the wind should carry a vessel in a direction so different from that in which it is moving itself."

"It is very curious, indeed," said Florence.

"By-and-by, in the course of the day, if there comes up a brisk wind," said Mrs. Morelle, "we shall see sloops and schooners and sail-boats going in all directions—some up, some down, and some across, and all blown by the same wind."

Mrs. Morelle's supposition was verified in the course of the day, in regard to the brisk wind. Such a wind, accompanied by dark and heavy

clouds from the west, sprang up in the afternoon, and from one of the clouds quite a little shower of rain fell. Mrs. Morelle would have been somewhat afraid, if the boatman had not assured her that there was no danger. So they went on. The boat dashed bravely through the billows, and turned this way and that with great agility, in winding its way through the crooked channel in the Highlands, and in turning aside to keep clear of the great steamers.

During the early part of the day, John was afraid that they should get to West Point too soon. He wished it was a hundred miles off, he said, instead of only twenty-five or thirty miles. When, however, the children came out of the cabin after their study hour, they found that the wind had subsided, and that it was almost calm. In fact, the boat did not appear to be going forward at all. So John was relieved, for the time, from his anxiety lest they were to finish their voyage too soon.

After the little shower, too, in the afternoon, the wind went down again until it became almost calm. John went to the helm, where Nelson, the boatman's boy, was stationed, and asked him what he thought about the wind.

"Oh! it will breeze up by-and-by," said the boy.

"We are hardly going at all now, are we?" asked John.

"Not much—only what the tide carries us," said the boy.

"The tide?" repeated John.

"Yes," said Nelson, "the tide is setting up, and so we drift a little."

In all such rivers as the Hudson, where the fall of the water is not great for some distance back into the interior, the tide, when it rises in the sea, opposite the mouth of the river, flows, of course, into it, and sets the water that is already there back, thus causing a current for a certain number of hours to flow from the sea in toward the land. Then, a few hours later, when the tide goes down, in the sea, the water in the river all runs out again. This is called the ebb tide. When the water is coming in, it is called the flood tide.

Rivers which the tide from the sea enters in this way, causing the current to flow a part of the time one way, and a part of the time the other, are called *tidal* rivers. In the case of the Hudson, the tide sets up as far as Albany. Our sail-boat was now entering the Highlands, which are near the lower part of the river, not more than thirty or forty miles from its mouth, and,

of course, in this place the tide sometimes sets up pretty strong.

The boat drifted on in this way for half an hour, and at length began gradually to draw toward the land. The boatman looked out this way and that from the bows somewhat anxiously. John stood by his side.

"We must look out sharp," said he, "or we shall run aground."

"Let us go ashore," said John, "and wait till the wind comes."

"Well," said the boatman ; "here is a landing that we might fetch with the sweeps, if your mother thinks it best to go ashore."

"I will go and ask her," said John.

So John went to the cabin to speak to his mother. He found her sitting near a shady and pleasant window, with her work and some books lying on a little camp-stool near her. John made his proposal to her that they should go ashore at the landing, and wait till there was more wind.

"If we do n't do that," said John, "we are in danger of running aground on the rocks or shoals."

"Can not we steer away from the rocks and shoals?" said his mother.

"No, mother," replied John ; "we can't steer when we are drifting, so Nelson says. You see

the rudder will not take any hold The rudder will not take hold unless we are going *through* the water. When we are drifting, we are not going through the water at all. We go *with* the water."

"Is there any hotel or tavern near the landing?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"I do not know," said John, "but the boatman will know. I will go and ask him.

So John went forward to ask the boatman about the tavern, and in a few minutes he returned and said that there was a nice little tavern near the landing, where they could have tea, the boatman said, and be very comfortable.

It was accordingly decided to stop. The boatman immediately got out his sweeps, as he called them, which were nothing more nor less than two long oars, and called out to Nelson to leave the helm, and come and help him. The two together, boatman and boy, soon pulled the boat to the land. John sat down on the same thwart with Nelson, and took hold with him of the handle of the ponderous oar, and did what he could to help in the rowing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LITTLE ALLAN.

As soon as the boat came up alongside the little pier, the boatman took in the sweeps, and the whole party went ashore. They followed the winding path which Nelson pointed out to them as the one leading to the tavern. The road ascended in an oblique direction among the trees, and soon the tavern came into view.

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, as soon as she saw the house, "it is a very nice looking place. We will stop here to take tea at any rate, and perhaps we will stay all night. We will see how the wind is after tea."

So they all went into the house. A nice looking young woman received them at the door, and ushered them all into a little back parlor which opened out into a pretty yard. Mrs. Morelle ordered tea, and while it was getting ready John and Florence concluded to go out and take a walk.

"We want to look about a little," said John, "and see what we can find."

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "Only come back within half an hour; and if you find a breeze beginning to blow, you had better come back sooner perhaps."

So the children set off together to take their walk. They first went out into the yard, and after remaining there a few minutes to look at the ducks and chickens, they spied a gate which led to a little lane.

"Ah, John!" said Florence, "look at this pretty green lane. Let us go and take a walk in it. Perhaps we shall find some flowers along by the fences."

So they passed through the gate, and began to walk quietly along the lane. There was a garden on one side and a field on the other. The children stopped now and then, to climb up on the fence and look over into the garden, in order to see the flowers that were growing there. Florence did not see any growing wild outside.

Pretty soon they saw a small house, painted red, at a little distance before them up the lane. The house was very small, but it looked neat and pretty, and there were flowers growing about the door and window. There was a nice, tidy looking woman sitting on a great flat stone which formed the door-step, knitting.

But what most attracted the attention of Flo-

rence and John, was a small group of children who were huddled together upon the grassy slope in front of the house, with their heads bent down as if they were trying to do something on the ground.

When Florence and John reached the spot, they found that there was a short board upon the ground, and one of the children—a pale, but smiling and happy looking boy—was sitting upon it quietly, while the rest seemed to be at work doing something to the board. One of the children had a rope loose in his hands, and another had a stone with which he was attempting to drive a nail into the board, near the forward end.

“Look out!” said one of the boys, just as John came up, “be careful, or you will pound Allie’s toes.”

“What is the matter?” said John. “What are you trying to do?”

“We are trying to mend Allan’s cart,” said the boy with the rope, looking up at the same time, with an expression of curiosity mingled with something like fear in his countenance.

“That is not a cart,” said John; “it has not got any wheels.”

“It is all the cart that Allan has got,” said the boy. “We haul him about on it. It is the only way he has to get about.”

"Can't he walk?" asked Florence.

"No," said the boy, "his legs a'n't of any use to him."

Both Florence and John looked at little Allan's legs, as they lay extended forward upon the board, and they observed that they appeared to have no strength in them.

"He can't walk at all," said the boy with the stone, "and so we haul him. But now we can't make the rope hold on."

"You ought to have a hole through the board," said John, "and put the rope through the hole, and so bring it under and tie it in front, and then it would be strong."

"But we have not got any thing to bore the hole with," said one of the boys.

"If I only had an auger here now," said John to Florence, "how quick I could bore a hole for them."

"I wish you had one," said Florence.

"Don't you know where there is an auger, boys?" said John, turning again to the boys.

"An auger?" said the boy with the stone. "No. Perhaps Mrs. Williams can tell. There she is. She is Allan's mother."

So saying, the boy pointed to the woman who was sitting on the step of the door.

"Let us go and ask her," said John.

So he and Florence went up to the house, and told Mrs. Williams that the boys could not make their rope hold to draw Allan about; but that if he had an auger, he thought he could bore a hole for them in the board, and that then they could fasten the rope strong.

"An auger?" said she. "No, I am afraid that I have not got any auger; I have got a large gimlet, if that would do. But I suppose that would be too small."

"Perhaps I can do with it," said John.

"At any rate," said Mrs. Williams, "I am very much obliged to you for wanting to help the poor little fellow. I will bring you the gimlet."

So Mrs. Williams went into the house, and presently returned, bringing with her the gimlet. John took it and went back to the place where he had left the children.

"I have a gimlet here," said he, "but it is a great deal too small. And so I am going to try the plan of boring a good many holes, round in a ring, and then cutting away the rest of the wood with my knife, and so make a good big hole."

By means of this ingenious contrivance, John soon succeeded in making a hole through the board. The hole was quite a ragged and irregu-

lar one, it is true, and it was a good deal larger than was necessary. Still it answered very well. John put the rope through and tied it, and then the boys found that they could draw the cart, as they called it—though it would have been much more correct to have called it a drag—quite tolerably well. They could, however, only draw it where there was grass. On the gravel of the road, the friction was so great that they could scarcely move it at all.

While the children were pulling little Allan in this way about upon the drag, Florence and John went back to the house to return the gimlet. Mrs. Williams seemed very grateful to them for the kindness that they had shown to her poor lame boy, and she told them a great deal about him—how he had been made lame by a fit of sickness, and how the strength of his limbs was now gradually increasing, so that she hoped that before long he would be able to walk again.

“He likes very much to play horses,” said she. “He sits on one of my little footstools, and takes another for his horse, and makes believe that he is taking a ride, and in doing so he jumps up and down, and works his feet a great deal, which is of much advantage to him. The doctor says that the more he exercises his feet, the better it will be for him.”

Just at this moment something seemed suddenly to attract John's attention in the trees that shaded Mrs. Williams's house.

"Look!" said John, addressing Florence.
"Look!"

"What is it?" asked Florence.

"A breeze," said John. "See how the leaves are rustling and waving! We must go!"

So John, after hastily explaining to Mrs. Williams that they were on a voyage, and had only come into that port to wait for a wind, bade her good bye, and ran off with Florence down the lane. They passed Allan and his team as they ran, and called out a good bye to them too.

Tea was ready when John and Florence reached the inn, and immediately after tea the whole party embarked again. There was a fine breeze, and they had a delightful evening sail up to West Point. They arrived at the West Point landing about nine o'clock, and went immediately up to the hotel.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WEST POINT.

WEST POINT is the great military academy of the United States, where the young men are educated and trained who are destined to serve as officers in the army.

It is situated on an extensive plain among the Highlands on the Hudson river. The plain is surrounded by mountains on two sides, and by the steep banks of the river on the other two sides. There are beautiful walks along the banks of the river, among the rocks and trees.

There is a wide plain where the cadets of the academy perform their military evolutions. On one side of this plain is a range of large and handsome buildings, used by the cadets for class-rooms, barracks, halls for exercise, and other purposes. Behind them is a street with a row of professors' houses extending along it, and at a short distance, down a deep dell, quite a little village lies nestled, where the musicians, and the laborers, and the common soldiers belonging to the establishment reside, and where the manufactories

are situated in which the cadets are taught to make rockets, and to fill bombshells, and to fabricate other explosive and fulminating means of destruction. The grounds, and all the appurtenances, are always kept in the nicest military order, and the situation is so picturesque and so beautiful, and the maneuvers and performances of the cadets on the green are so exciting, that the place has become noted as one of the most charming spots to be visited by a traveler that can be found in America. There is a large hotel on the plain which is almost always filled with genteel and agreeable company.

John and Florence arose very early the next morning, being awakened by the sunrise gun, and went out upon the plain. They were greatly delighted with all that they saw. When the bell rang for breakfast, they came in. They found their mother waiting for them in the parlor. So, John leading the way, and his mother and Florence following, they all went out to breakfast together.

They had a very nice breakfast, and while they were eating it, the children gave their mother very glowing accounts of what they had seen during the morning. There was to be a parade that day, they said, on the plain, at nine o'clock. Mrs. Morelle said that she was very glad to hear

that, both because she would like to see the parade herself, and also because she was very glad that the children should have an opportunity to see it.

"Indeed," said she, "as you have never been here before, and may not come soon again, I wish you to see all that you can, and on the whole, although the understanding was that you were to go on with your studies here, just as you would have done at home, for one hour in the forenoon, and one hour in the afternoon, yet I have concluded to excuse you from your studies to-day, if you wish. I will let you decide it. You may do just as you please, yourselves, about studying while you are here."

The children both looked quite pleased with this proposition, but presently John said to Florence that he wished to speak to her a moment, and asked her to go out with him to the door. When they were by themselves, John said,

"I think, Florence, we had better study to-day just as usual. It will be for our interest to study, because, you see, if mother finds that always when we are on such excursions as these, we study just as much and as well as we do at home, she will be willing to take us all the oftener."

"So she will," said Florence.

"And it is only one hour," said John.

"One hour in the forenoon, and one in the afternoon," suggested Florence.

"Yes," said John, "but that is not much."

"Well," said Florence, "let us study. We will have a study hour this morning, at any rate."

So the children went back and told their mother that they would prefer to study an hour that morning, just as usual.

"Very well," said their mother, "it is just as you please. If you conclude to study, I think I shall give you a composition to write for your lesson. For the first half-hour you are to write it carefully in pencil. Then, when I have corrected it, you are to transcribe it as carefully and handsomely as you can. The transcribing must be done at the hotel, for you will want a table for that ; but if you choose, you can write the first draft out in the open air somewhere."

"Yes, mother," said John, "we shall like that very much. There are some very nice seats under the shade of the trees along the banks of the river, and we will do our writing there. We can sit right down upon the grass," he added, turning to Florence, "and write with our paper upon the seat for a table."

"Well," said Mrs. Morelle, "and I will find a comfortable seat somewhere near, and sit and read while you are writing.

"And now there is one thing more," continued Mrs. Morelle. "I think it will be best for us to return home, when we are ready to go, by the railroad, and not keep the boat waiting here for us. We have had sailing enough in coming up here, and when the time comes for going home, we shall all like it better to go down in the cars."

Florence and John had no objection to make to this arrangement. It is true that they had enjoyed the sail very much in coming up, but their desire for sailing was in some degree satisfied for the time being, and they were willing to adopt a different mode of traveling in going home.

Accordingly, the boatman was sent for, and after being paid, was dismissed, and in an hour after he set out with Nelson, his boy, to return home.

About eleven o'clock, which was after parade was over, Mrs. Morelle, with the two children, set out from the hotel to go along the bank of the river, by the gravel walk, to look for a quiet and retired place for pursuing their morning studies.

"Mother," said Florence, as they walked along, "what a great academy this is,—with all these great buildings and that street of professors' houses, and the cannons on the bank and all!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "it is a very large and expensive establishment. It belongs to the general government."

"To the general government?" said Florence. "What is that?"

"It is the government at Washington," said Mrs. Morelle. "You know this country is divided into States, each of which has a government, and there is a general government besides, which includes the whole country. The general government has the charge of some things, and the State government of some things. The defense of the country against foreign enemies belongs to the general government, and so all the forts and armies, and the ships of war, and the great armories, belong to that government, and not to any of the States; or rather, they are under its charge, for, properly speaking, they belong to the nation. So you see, this academy is under the charge of the government at Washington. They appoint the officers and the professors, and they appoint the students."

"The students?" said John. "Are the students appointed?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Morelle, "they are all appointed by the government. They are all paid, too, by the government, while they are here."

John thought it very strange that students should be paid for being educated.

"The reason is," said Mrs. Morelle, "that they come into the *service* of the government as soon as they enter the institution, in order to be trained to do certain work which the government requires to be done. When they get through with their studies, they go into the army as officers, and take command of forts, or march against the Indians in the western country, or carry on the war, if there is one, against any of the neighboring countries."

About this time, Mrs. Morelle and the children came to the margin of the plain, toward the river, where there was a steep bank, fifty or a hundred feet high, which was rendered very picturesque by the rocks and trees with which it was covered. The walk descended part of the way down this bank, and then followed it for a long distance, winding in the most romantic manner among the rocks and under the trees. Now the path passed under a cliff, and now it came out upon the edge of a precipice, and here and there it conducted

the promenader to some shady seat or retired and solitary bower.

The children, who had explored this path to some extent before breakfast, were now delighted to show it to their mother, and before a great while they found a seat which they thought would be exactly the place for them to do their work upon. So they took possession of it at once, without any ceremony.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HISTORY OF A WORD.

"Now, children," said Mrs. Morelle, "what I concluded to give you to do to-day is to write a composition. I decided upon that because I thought it would be rather hard."

The children thought it was strange that their mother should choose work for them on that day that was specially hard, but they said nothing, and so Mrs. Morelle continued,

"I knew that if you were going to study an hour to-day, you would feel better satisfied if you did something that was worth doing, instead of taking something very easy just by way of pretense. The subject of your compositions is to be our voyage up yesterday. Each of you may write the account in your own way, and each of you may select from all that happened whatever you think is most important or most interesting to be described. I suppose you will write quite different accounts, as a girl and a boy would probably be interested in different things. You can head your accounts with any caption you

please. You may call yours, Florence, 'Narrative of a Voyage to West Point,' or 'Journal of a Day on the Hudson,' or any other such name. John may call his, if he pleases, the 'Log of the Sail-boat Fanny.'"

"The log?" repeated John.

"Yes," said his mother, "the journal of a vessel's voyage from day to day is called the log."

"That is a curious name," said Florence.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Morelle, "it is a very curious name indeed."

"I do not see how the journal of a ship should come to be called a log," said John.

"It is a very curious case of etymology," said Mrs. Morelle. "Do you know what etymology means?"

Both the children shook their heads. John had studied in a grammar, once, that "Etymology teaches" something or other, but he could not remember what.

"Etymology teaches the origin of words," said Mrs. Morelle; "that is, it explains how certain words are formed from other words, and how they come to mean certain things. So the question how it happens that the word *log* means a journal kept at sea is a question of etymology, and the case is a very curious one. I will explain it to you before you begin your studies.

"I am not quite certain, after all," said Mrs. Morelle, "that it is exactly a question of etymology, for I am not going to show you how the word was formed, but only how it came to mean a journal. The case is this :

"When people first kept an account of their voyages at sea, the principal thing was to put down how fast the ship was going, for all the different hours of the day, and in what direction she was going. It was necessary to put this down in order to have the means of calculating every day how far the ship had gone and where she was.

"Now the way they measured the speed of the vessel through the water was by throwing overboard a small piece of wood, which was at first in the form of a log probably. At any rate, it was called a log, and it is called so still, though it is made now in the shape of a three-cornered piece of board, not much bigger than a man's hand. There is a long cord tied to this log, and they find out how fast the vessel is going by observing how long it takes this cord to run out, when the log is thrown overboard, and left to float in the water.

"They measure the speed of the vessel in this way every two hours when a vessel is at sea, and the captain, or the mate, puts the figures down

in a book, so as to keep an exact reckoning. They put other things down, too, but the distances run, as shown by the log, are the most frequent entries, and so the book was called the log-book. In process of time, the journal itself came to be called the *log*. And that is what I call a curious case of etymology."

"I call it so, too," said Florence

"I wish," said John, "that I had known all about this while we were on our voyage. I might have hove the log from our sail-boat, and so found out how fast we were going."

"But they never heave the log when they are in sight of land," said Mrs. Morelle. "They can always tell by the land where they are, and how fast they are going along."

"Never mind," said John; "I might have done it just for play."

"But you had not any log," said Florence.

"I could have brought a piece of wood with me from the house," said John. "Any piece of wood would have done."

"But you had not any long string," said Florence.

"Yes," said John, "I had a line. The one I saved the boy's boat with. And if that would not have been long enough, I might have brought my kite twine."

"So you might," said Florence. "That would have been an excellent plan."

"You would have had to measure the kite twine," said Mrs. Morelle, "so as to know how long it was, and you would have required a watch with a second hand, or a minute glass, or something of the sort, so as to observe the time exactly. It would be necessary to know the length of the line run out, and the length it took in running out. Then you might have made a calculation how fast the boat was going."

"The next time I go a sailing," said John, "I will have a log and a line, and try it."

"That will be a good plan," said Mrs. Morelle. "And another thing that you can do, will be to have a sounding line, and so sound in different places along the river, and see how deep the water is."

"Yes," said John, "I should like to do that too."

"If you wish to do it scientifically," said Mrs. Morelle, "you must get some sort of weight, as for example a short and pretty thick iron bar, like a window weight, or something of that sort."

"I know something we have got at home," said John, "that will just do."

"You must measure the line off into fathoms," said Mrs. Morelle.

"How much is a fathom?" asked John.

"Six feet," said his mother.

"Then why don't they say six feet," said John, "instead of fathom, which we do not understand?"

"I do not know," said Mrs. Morelle. "The fathom is a sort of sea measure. They measure depths by it, and lengths of cables. People never use fathoms in measuring on shore, but always feet, yards, rods, and other measures similar to these. I do not know how the custom arose of measuring by fathoms at sea.

"It is very curious," added Mrs. Morelle "that all these measure originated in some standard derived from the human body. A foot is the length of a man's foot. An inch is the length of the outer joint of his thumb. In some languages, the name of an inch and a thumb is the same. A pace is as far as a man can step. A cubit is the length of his arm from the elbow to the end of the finger. A span is as far as he can reach with his thumb and finger."

Here John and Florence began to measure a span on the seat, by putting down their thumbs in one place, and then seeing how far they could stretch the end of the long finger.

"I can stretch farther than you can," said Florence.

"Yes," said John, "your fingers are longer and slenderer than mine."

"Of course, this kind of measuring is not exact," said Mrs. Morelle, "and it was only used in the beginning, when there was no occasion for being very exact. A fathom was first measured by reaching out with both arms. If a man is of full length, six feet, he can reach six feet by stretching out both arms, one on each side. So, if you are in danger of forgetting how much a fathom is, remember that it is as far as a man can reach from one side to the other with his arms.

"But now," continued Mrs. Morelle, "you must take your work. I will take my book and read while you are writing. Begin and give an account of our voyage up the river. Write it carefully and well. You are going to write as much as you can in half an hour. When it is within five minutes of the end of the half hour, I will tell you, so that you may bring your narratives to a close.

"And now, think a moment and see if you have both got a beginning. If not, I will give you one."

Mrs. Morelle used often to give the children a beginning, as she called it, when they had a composition to write. She had observed, as many

other persons have done, that when children are writing composition, it often costs them more perplexity and trouble to make a beginning, and write the first ten words, than is required for all the rest of the work. In other words, they find it extremely difficult to begin, but once begun, there is very little difficulty in going on prosperously to the end.

There is a good philosophical reason for this ; for when a composition is once begun, there is something in each sentence to suggest, and sometimes almost to determine, what is to come next. But there is no help of this sort for the *first* sentence. I would recommend, therefore, in case this book should be read by any older brother or sister who sometimes has a younger brother or sister to teach, that when they give them an original composition to write, they should, if the pupil wishes it, give them the first sentence, or part of the first sentence, by way of a clue to set them going. They will find, if they do this, that the pupil will then often go on very well, when, if he had been left entirely unaided, he would have spent a great deal of time, and incurred a very unnecessary amount of perplexity in determining how to begin.

Mrs. Morelle taught the children that it was always best for them to make their own begin-

ning, if they could. But if they could not, she would help them.

Accordingly when in this case she asked them whether they had beginnings, John, after a few minutes' reflection, said that he could begin himself, but Florence wished her mother to give her the first few words.

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "Take your pencil and paper, and tell me when you are ready to write."

"Now, mother," said Florence, when she was all ready.

"We embarked on board the sail-boat about —" said Mrs. Morelle. "Write that, and then go on yourself."

Then taking out her watch to see what time it was, Mrs. Morelle told the children that their half hour was now going to begin. So they went to work at their writing, while Mrs. Morelle opened her book and began to read.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE COMPOSITIONS.

At length, five minutes before the end of the half hour, Mrs. Morelle said,

“Five minutes more.”

The children made no reply, but went on busily writing.

Five minutes afterwards Mrs. Morelle said,

“The time is out.”

The children, however, went on writing. It was the understanding in such cases that they were released when their time was out, but still, if they chose to continue their work longer, they were at liberty to do so. In a few minutes, Florence stopped and said that hers was done. John went on writing, but presently he stopped too, and then they rose from their seats, folded up their papers, and put them into Mrs. Morelle's book to keep them smooth while they were going home.

That afternoon, the compositions were corrected by Mrs. Morelle, and then the children

made a fair copy of them, sitting at a table in their mother's chamber at the hotel. When they were finished, their mother read them aloud. She first read Florence's. It was as follows :

JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE TO WEST POINT.

BY FLORENCE MORELLE.

We embarked on board the sail-boat about ten o'clock. It was a very pleasant morning, because the barometer was so high.

My mother sat by the cabin window reading, but I took a little camp-stool, and put it in a shady corner outside, where I could lean my back against something, and see the shore.

We went along very near the shore, and it was very pretty to see the green slopes of grass, and the gardens, and the little paths coming down to the water, and the pleasure-boats at the different landings.

We came to a little island about the middle of the forenoon, and we went ashore upon it and played Robinson Crusoe for half an hour. John was Robinson Crusoe, and I was his man Friday. Mother came ashore a few minutes, but soon she went back to the boat, and sat there reading, because she could not find any good seat

on the little island. There were no stones along the shore, only some sand.

Once a railroad train went by close to the water when we were very near, and we waved our handkerchiefs to the locomotive, and to all the passengers on the cars.

We had a terrible storm in the afternoon, and came very near being shipwrecked, and also to being run over by a great steamer. But afterward the storm went by, and we proceeded on our voyage. There is not time for me to write about our supper at the tavern, and about Allan Williams, a little lame boy that we saw up the lane.

THE END.

John's composition was as follows :

L O G

Of the Sail-boat Fanny, on a Voyage from Tappan Sea to West Point.

Captain.—Mr. John Scoop.

Crew.—Master Nelson Scoop.

Passengers.—Mrs. Catharine Morelle, Miss Florence Morelle, Master John Morelle.

When we set sail, the wind was very light, and was rather ahead, but the captain said we could "lay our course" very well.

I tried to climb up a rope hand over hand, and I found I could climb much better than when I tried at home, for the rope was larger, and I could get hold better. Nelson could climb up just like a monkey.

All the forenoon we had light winds and calms, but in the afternoon there was a heavy squall, which nearly threw us on our beam ends. They brought the boat up into the wind and she righted, and then they took in the sails. But pretty soon the sun came out, and we went on.

After this, at one time, when we were sailing along near the shore, where there was a sandy beach, we saw a little vessel which some boys had been sailing, but which had got away from them, and they could not get it. So they called out to us and asked us to get it for them, and we did. Mr. Scoop steered up alongside the little vessel, and then I leaned over the gunwale of the boat, and took it up out of the water.

Then the boys wanted us to bring it to the shore, but we could not go to the shore, because the water was too shallow. We told them that they must wade out and get it, but they did not dare to wade out for fear that they should get out of their depth, and be carried away by the current and be drowned.

Then I thought of a plan for getting a line on

shore, and so sending the little vessel back. I had a piece of twine in my pocket, and Mr. Scoop had a cent with a hole in it. I put the end of my twine through the hole and tied it. Then I coiled up the twine on the gunwale, and tied the inner end of it to one of the thole-pins. Then I threw the cent to the shore, and the boys picked it up. In that way I got the line on shore.

Then I untied the end of the line that was on the boat, so as to take it off from the thole-pin, and tied it to the bowsprit of the little vessel, and the boys drew it to the shore.

When we sailed away, the boys gave us three cheers.

THE END.

John said that there was a great deal more that he wanted to tell about what happened during the voyage, but that there was not time enough.

CHAPTER XXX.

LITTLE ALLAN AGAIN.

THE party returned from West Point by the railroad, and as they came down along the bank of the river, Florence said that she meant to look out and see if she could not catch a glimpse of the house where little Allan lived, as they went by.

While they were at the house on the day that they came up, and just as John was occupied in boring his gimlet holes, they heard a train go by. Florence looked up the lane a little way beyond the house, and there she saw the train going over a bridge. The lane was in a sort of dell, or narrow valley, and the bridge was built over this valley, a short distance above Mrs. Williams' house, so that, standing in front of the house, Florence could see the train passing among the trees and over the bridge, a little way beyond her. She thought that she should know the place when she passed it in going down.

"We will sit here by the window," she said to John, "and watch, and we shall know when

we are going over the valley by the rumbling on the bridge, and then we can look for the house, and perhaps we shall see Allan out at the door playing."

Their mother told them when they had come to the right part of the road to look. John sat upon the seat next the window, and Florence stood before him, leaning on the window-sill and looking out.

Presently they came to the opening in the trees which was occasioned by the dell, and as the train went thundering by over the bridge, they both caught a glimpse of the red house, and of little Allan sitting on a footstool before the door, with a pair of reins fastened to another little footstool, which he had placed before him for a horse. He stopped driving his horse when he heard the train coming, and looked to see it pass by. John and Florence waved their handkerchiefs to him. Allan did not see the handkerchiefs waving, for he was watching the locomotive all the time. He, however, took off his cap, and waved it in the air with a loud cheer.

"Poor little fellow!" said Florence. "He is playing horses with those two stools. I wish he had something better than two stools for horses and carriages."

"Let us buy him something," said John.

"What could we buy him?" asked Florence.

"We might buy him a little wagon," said John, "and then the children could draw him about a great deal better."

"It would be better to have something that he could use himself," said Florence. "Because the children go to school, I suppose, and he is left at home alone a great deal of the time, and so he wants something to amuse himself with—all by himself."

"Yes," said John, "that is very true."

"Then besides," said Florence, "he would not get any exercise in being drawn about in that way; at least not for his feet and legs."

"We might buy him a rocking-horse," said John.

"I don't believe we can spare money enough to buy a rocking-horse," said Florence. "A rocking-horse costs a great deal."

"There is a cheap kind," said John, "that are just as good for exercise as the dear kind, though they do not look so stylish. They only have a horse's head on in front, but no legs or tail."

"Yes," said Florence, "they have a tail sometimes."

"They may have a tail sometimes," said John, "but they have no legs, and so they do not look like a horse. But then there is a good way to

sit on, and stirrups, and a bridle, and so I think one of them would do for Allan very well."

"At any rate, it would be better than two stools," said Florence.

"Yes, indeed," said John. "We could buy one for two dollars. You could give one of the dollars, and I could give one."

"Well," said Florence, "and then, how could we get it to him?"

"Oh, we could go up some time on the railroad," said John. "Mother would go with us, I am sure. We would stop at the station that is nearest, and then carry the rocking-horse to the house."

John and Florence had an allowance from their mother, as has already been said, of half a dollar a week, for pocket money, rides, purchase of toys, and other such purposes. Their mother kept an account of this money in a book. There was an account for each of the children. In these accounts were entered, from time to time, the amounts due the children at fifty cents per week on one side, and on the other side the amounts paid the children to be expended. The balance of these two columns would show at any time how much remained due to them.

The children were naturally desirous to increase this balance, and they had been so pru-

dent and economical, that the amounts now due them were eight or ten dollars each. So that they could well afford to contribute a dollar to buy a rocking-horse for little Allan if they were so disposed.

After having decided to make this expenditure, if their mother was willing, they went forward to the place where she was sitting, a few seats forward in the car, in order to see what she thought about it.

They had already, while taking their tea at the tavern, on the day when they came up the river, given their mother an account of little Allan, and of John's making a hole in the board for him, and now they told her about their having just seen him again, and about his playing horses with the two stools, and of their plan to buy him a little rocking-horse.

"Not a dear one, mother," said John; "only a cheap one. One that will cost only two dollars."

"Have you any objection, mother?" asked Florence.

"Are the people poor?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"No, mother," said Florence, "I do not think they are poor. His mother lives in a small house, but it looks very comfortable, and there were a

great many nice things in it, so that I do not think she is poor."

"Then I have no objection," said Mrs. Morelle. "On the contrary, I think it is a very good plan. Indeed, I should like to have a share in it myself, if you will take me in. I will pay one dollar, and you two can pay half a dollar a piece, and that will make it up."

The children thought that for their mother to pay a whole dollar, while they only paid half a dollar each, would be more than her share; but Mrs. Morelle said that she thought it would be about fair to divide it in that way, and so the children acquiesced.

It was settled that the rocking-horse should be purchased the very next time the children went to New York.

It may seem somewhat strange that Mrs. Morelle should be in doubt about giving the children permission to make the purchase of the rocking-horse, until she found out that little Allan's mother was not poor, and that she then at once gave her consent. But the truth was, that her ideas were somewhat peculiar about doing good by giving money to the poor. I am not prepared to say whether they were correct or not. She considered destitution and poverty, in such a

country as ours, as generally occasioned by idleness or vice. Indeed, she thought that the sufferings of poverty were the very penalty expressly designed by divine Providence as the punishment for idleness and vice, and consequently, giving money to the poor thoughtlessly, and without inquiry or consideration, and merely under the influence of temporary feeling, was simply an interposition by man between sin and the penalty which God in his providence had specially designed as the punishment for sin, in order to deter others from committing it; and thus, while it relieved present suffering, was very likely to open the way for much greater suffering in time to come than it relieved for the time being.

It is true, she used to say, that people sometimes become poor and friendless from inevitable misfortunes, and often when they become poor from their own fault their sufferings ought to be relieved. But to do this in a safe manner, so as not to encourage idleness, vice, and imposture, is a very delicate and difficult work. It is no work for children.

While, therefore, she herself did a great deal for the relief of the poor in the town where she lived, she did not encourage the children to attempt any thing in this way. They were

to do good by sympathizing with, and relieving as far as they could, such trials and sufferings as were not connected generally with poverty.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE WINTER SHOP.

AT the time when the expedition to West Point took place, as described in the preceding chapter, it was rather late in the season, and a few mornings after the children returned home there came a cold wind from the north which darkened the water on the river, and made the leaves begin to fall from the trees.

"Mother," said the children, "see ! the leaves are falling, and the winter is coming. We might as well go to New York *now*, and buy the stock and tools for our winter shop. And we can buy little Allan's rocking horse at the same time."

"It is not really time to prepare the winter shop yet," said Mrs. Morelle. "It will be two months before we have any snow storms. Still we can go and do it now if you wish."

"Yes, mother, please let us go," said Florence. "We want to buy little Allan his rocking-horse before it gets too cold for him to use it out of doors."

"Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "You and

John may arrange a plan, and if you arrange it judiciously, we will go."

"Should you be willing to have us plan to stay all night in New York?" said Florence.

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "if John will do all the business, so that I shall not have any care."

"I'll do the business," said John, eagerly. "I can do it all just as well as not. I'll get a carriage, and buy the tickets, and do every thing."

"Well," said Mrs. Morelle, "then I will leave you to plan the whole affair. You shall arrange it just as you please, and then only let me know what I am to do. I will go under your direction entirely until you get into some difficulty, and then I will take the business into my own hands. So you and Florence may talk the matter over together, and after you have decided upon your plan, let me know when I must be ready to go."

The children were greatly pleased with this arrangement, and they went out at once to consult together respecting the details of the plan. John was desirous of setting off that very afternoon, but Florence persuaded him to postpone the hour of departure until the next morning.

"It will be more convenient to mother," she said, "to go to-morrow, because that will give her more time to get ready. Besides, if we go

from here in the morning we shall have more time in New York."

John was convinced by this reasoning, and so the children went in together and gave notice to their mother that they were to go in the ten o'clock train the next morning.

"Very well," said she. "I will be ready."

The next morning accordingly, at half past nine o'clock, a carriage came up to the Octagon from the stable to take the party down to the station. When they arrived there, John helped his mother and sister to descend from the carriage to the platform, and then led the way into the ladies' waiting-room.

"And now, mother," said John, as he showed her to a seat, "if you will take a seat here, and give me some money, I will go and get the tickets."

Mrs. Morelle accordingly sat down upon the settee which John had pointed out to her, and taking out her purse she gave him a five dollar bill.

"I will bring you back the tickets and the change in a minute, mother," said John.

"You make keep the change," said his mother, "to pay the other expenses with. You must remember every thing that you pay, and when we get to New York we will put it all down, and

add it up, and then you can pay me back the balance that remains, once for all."

"Well," said John, "then I will put the change in my wallet."

So saying, John went to the ticket window to buy the tickets. Pretty soon he came back with three tickets, which he handed to his mother.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Morelle.

"The tickets," said John.

"I have nothing to do with them," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Am I to keep them?" asked John.

"Certainly," said his mother. "That is part of your duty if you undertake to conduct the expedition. The gentleman who has charge of the party always takes care of the tickets."

"Very well," said John. "I should *like* to take charge of them."

"But, mother, suppose he loses them," said Florence.

"In that case we shall be in difficulty," said Mrs. Morelle, "and then the power will all come back to me again, and I can do just as I please."

"And what should you do, mother?" asked John.

"I might conclude to stop at the next station, and so go back home again," said Mrs. Morelle.

"If I were to decide to do that, should you consent to go back good-naturedly?"

"Why—yes, mother," said John, "I suppose I should."

"You certainly ought to go good-naturedly," said his mother; "that is, if you mean to fulfill your agreement in an honorable manner. We agreed that you were to have the whole charge of the expedition until you should get us into some difficulty, and that then the charge was to revert to me. Therefore, if you do get us into difficulty by losing the tickets, or in any other way, you will be bound in honor to give up the control to me again, and to be as submissive and obedient then, as I am now, while you retain the power."

"Well, mother, I will," said John; "but you may depend upon it, I will look out well and *not* lose the tickets."

So John put the tickets in his wallet, and put his wallet in his pocket. He then buttoned his pocket up in the securest manner possible.

Whenever, after stopping at a way station, the conductor passed through the cars and called for the tickets, John would take his wallet out, and open it far enough to show the conductor the tickets, and then shut it up and put it away again.

In this way John kept his tickets very safely, and the whole party went on without meeting with any difficulty until they came to New York. The conductor came round and took all the tickets just before the train arrived.

When the conductor thus came and took the tickets, John knew that the train must be very near New York, and the question came into his mind whether they were going to get out at the Thirty-first street station, or to go down to Chambers street.

The Thirty-first street station is pretty far up town, near where the railroad enters the city. The Chambers street station, on the other hand, is far down in town, not a great way from the City Hall. Sometimes, Mrs. Morelle was accustomed to get out at one station, and sometimes at the other. It depended upon what her plans were in the city, and where she was going first.

"Mother," said John, "where shall we stop? Are we going to get out at the Thirty-first street station, or to go down to Chambers street?"

"I don't know, I am sure," said Mrs. Morelle, shaking her head and looking very indifferent. "You have not told me what your plan is about that."

"Ah! it is for us to decide that, Florence," said John. "I did not think of that. Let's go

down to Chambers street. That will give us a longer ride."

"Well," said Florence, "so we will."

"Would you, mother?" said John, turning round to his mother, who was on the seat behind him.

"That depends upon what you are going to do after you arrive," said Mrs. Morelle. "I do not know what your plans are at all."

"I have not formed much of any plan, mother," said John, "only to go a-shopping and buy our things. I suppose, too, we must go to a hotel to spend the night. Can't you help us plan it a little, mother?"

"Oh! yes," said his mother, "I will give you any information and advice you wish for, and ask for, but it would not be proper for me to volunteer any advice before it is asked for, when another person is in charge. We can take a carriage and go shopping first, and then go to a hotel, or we can go to the hotel first and take our rooms, and then go and do our shopping."

After some farther conversation on the subject, during which Mrs. Morelle suggested a great many things, but did not recommend anything, John decided that they would go on as far as the Chambers street station, and then take a carriage and go to the Everett House, which is

a large and handsome hotel near Union Square. It would have been much nearer to have stopped at the Thirty-first street station for any one going to the Everett House, but John said that he wished to go the farthest way.

This plan was accordingly carried into effect. The train stopped at the upper station, and then the several cars were separated from each other, and to each car a pair of horses were attached. In this way the cars were taken down to Chambers street. There the party, of course, left their car, and John engaged a carriage to take them to the Everett House. He found the driver of the carriage, together with a great many others, standing upon the platform. They were all holding their whips in their hands, and they seemed very eager to get passengers to ride in their carriages.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PURCHASES.

WHAT the children meant by their winter shop was this :

In all pleasant days in the winter, Mrs. Morelle was accustomed to send John and Florence out to play almost as much as in summer. But there were a great many days when it was so wet or so stormy that they could not go out, and in such cases they were accustomed to amuse themselves in the house, and in order to afford proper means for this amusement, Mrs. Morelle used to provide and furnish every fall what she called the winter shop.

This shop was a large closet in the octagon room, which was well provided with shelves and drawers. During the summer the closet was used for other purposes, but in the fall of the year, when the time for fitting up the winter shop arrived, every thing was taken out, and the shelves and drawers were made a depository for such stores and materials as might be made

use of for winter work. These stores consisted of paints and paint-brushes, gum-bottles, glue and a glue-pot, fancy and colored paper of all kinds, bottles of varnish, pasteboard, thin strips of wood to make boxes of, and a great variety of other such things. It was to purchase the stores for this shop, as well as to buy the rocking-horse for little Allan, that the children had now come to New York.

After they had taken their rooms in the hotel—one room for Mrs. Morelle and Florence, and another smaller one adjoining for John—and when they had all made such changes and adjustments of their dress as were necessary after their ride in the carriage, John asked his mother when they were going to do their shopping.

“Whenever you please,” said Mrs. Morelle.

“Then let us go now,” said John.

“Very well,” replied Mrs. Morelle. “Do you know how to proceed to get a carriage?”

“Yes, mother,” said John, “I must ring the bell and order the waiter to call one for us.”

So John rang the bell, and when the waiter came, he ordered a carriage—one suitable for shopping in Broadway.

The waiter soon came and said that the carriage was at the door. The whole party accordingly descended the stairs, and there they found,

at the door of the ladies' entrance to the hotel, a large open carriage, with two very handsome horses to draw it. The driver opened the door of the carriage, and John assisted his mother and Florence to get in, and finally got in himself. The driver then mounted upon the box, and drove off down the avenue, between the tracks of the railroad and the high iron palisades of Union Park, and very soon they entered Broadway.

The children spent an hour or more in going to different stores, bookstores and others, to buy the different materials which they wanted. Whatever they bought was put up neatly in parcels by the shopmen, and then carried out to the carriage; so that after a little time the seats of the carriage became quite full of boxes, rolls, and little packages. After a while John said it was time for them to buy the rocking-horse, and so they drove to a store where there was a large assortment of such things. There were go-carts, velocipedes, little wagons, wheelbarrows, and rocking-horses, without number, and of a great variety of patterns and prices.

"Let us buy him a velocipede," said Florence. "Then he can go about himself. He can make his velocipede go by his hands alone, and his hands are as good and strong as any lady's. He

can go about with his velocipede without using his feet at all."

"But the very thing we want to do," said John, "is to get something that will *make* him use his feet, so as to exercise them, and make them get well."

"But he would like so much to be able to go about himself on a velocipede," said Florence. "Do let us get one for him. Would not you, mother?"

"He would like one, I have no doubt, very much," said Mrs. Morelle. "In fact, I think that at first he would like it better than a rocking-horse. A velocipede seems to be better for him for present pleasure, and a rocking-horse, or a rocking-boat, for permanent good."

So saying, Mrs. Morelle pointed to what she called a rocking-boat, though it might more properly be called a rocking-carriage. It was a sort of box, shaped somewhat like the body of a carriage, only it had no top, and the bottom of it was rounded in such a manner that the box would rock backwards and forwards when any person was sitting in it. There was a seat at the back end of the box, and a figure of a horse's head forward.

Both Florence and John thought that this would be exactly the thing for little Allan.

"He can sit on this seat and have a pair of reins go to the horse's mouth and so make believe that he is driving in a carriage, while he is rocking himself to and fro. He will have to use his feet a little all the time in rocking himself, and as they get stronger he will use them more and more, which will be exactly the thing."

So the children concluded to buy the rocking-boat. Their mother proposed that the shopman should send it home, but the children were afraid there might be some mistake if it were left to the shopman, and then besides, they were so pleased with the rocking-boat that they wished to keep it with them all the time. The shopman accordingly wrapped it up as well as he could, all except the horse's head, which John asked him to leave out so that they could see it, and then put it in the carriage. Mrs. Morelle and the children then got into the carriage too, and the coachman drove away.

They had some other purchases to make after this, and so they drove down Broadway. Presently Florence saw upon the sidewalk two girls that she knew. They were walking under the charge of their sister. Florence wished to invite them to get into the carriage, and John offered to make room for them by riding with the driver on the outside seat. Mrs. Morelle made no objec-

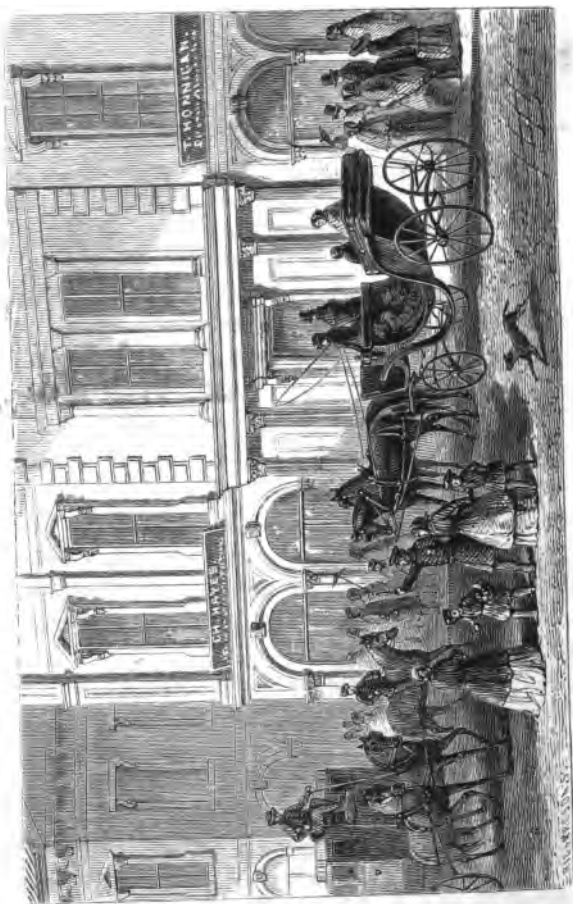
tion, and so the two children got into the carriage, and then the driver went on again. John, from his elevated seat, surveyed the scene of noise and confusion around him with an appearance of great satisfaction.

The two girls were much interested in the rocking-boat, and they asked Florence what it was. She told them what it was, and who it was for.

"I am glad we did not buy a velocipede for Allan for another reason," said she turning to her mother, "and that is, that there are no good smooth roads or paths about his house, where he could go on his velocipede."

"That is a very good reason," said Mrs. Morelle. "A velocipede requires good, smooth, level roads. They go along very nicely on the sidewalks in a city, but it is only a vexation to attempt to drive one over steep and stony paths in the country.

"Besides," continued Mrs. Morelle, "in cases of charity it is much better to have regard to ultimate and lasting good, than to present pleasure."



SHOPPING.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ORANGE QUESTION.

AFTER the shopping was finished, the driver of the carriage was directed to go first to the house where the two girls lived, which was a large and handsome house in Fourteenth street, and there the girls were left at the door. Florence invited them to come and make her a visit at the Everett House that evening, and they promised that they would come. John descended from his high seat to assist the two girls in coming down the steps of the carriage, and then he took his old place inside again, and the carriage drove on.

John and Florence decided to take a somewhat circuitous route in going home to the hotel, in order to lengthen the ride. They went down the Fifth avenue to Washington Parade Ground, thence around the Parade Ground, and along Fourth street to Broadway. As they came up Broadway from Fourth street, talking together about what they saw, their attention was attracted to a fruit shop which they were passing.

There was a great display of fruit at the door of this shop, and among the rest there were some baskets of lemons and oranges.

"Ah," said John, "*there* are some oranges. Grimkie expects me to bring him one, I suppose, but I shall do no such thing."

"What makes him expect you to do it?" asked Florence.

"Why, he says that I promised him I would," said John, "but I did not. At least it was not a fair promise."

"How was it?" asked Florence.

"There is too much noise for me to tell you about it here," said John, "but I will tell you after I get home."

Accordingly, after the party had returned to the hotel, and while they were sitting in the public drawing-room waiting to be called to dinner, Florence asked John how it was about his promise to carry Grimkie an orange.

"Why, yesterday," said John, "when Grimkie knew that I was coming to New York, he asked me if I would not bring him up an orange, and I said I did not think I could very well, and then he said that if I would he would take me to a place where I could see a ferocious beast shut up in an iron cage. So at last I said I would. And he took me to his house, round to

the back door, and into the shed, and there he showed me a small box, with wires for the front, like a cage, and his little black kitten inside of it asleep, on a bed made of a piece of carpet."

"And was that his ferocious beast?" asked Florence.

"Yes," said John, speaking in a very indignant tone. "I told him that a kitten was not a ferocious beast at all, and he said it was, in a state of nature, very ferocious. He said that cats belonged to the same class as lions and tigers, and had sharp teeth and sharp claws, and were always very fierce against mice, and little birds, and squirrels, and any thing else little enough for them to attack. And then besides, I told him that it was not an iron cage. It was nothing but a small box, with wires put in for the front. But he said that the wires were iron bars, little iron bars, and they made it an iron cage."

"And could not the kitten get out at all?" said Florence.

"Oh yes," said John; "there was a door in the side, where the kitten could get out whenever she pleased, but Grimkie said that she liked to stay there, and would go in of her own accord. There was a nice little bed for her in one corner. Then besides, the box was very pretty. Grimkie had painted it green."

"I wish Grimkie would make me such a cage for *my* kitten," said Florence.

"It was quite a nice little cage for a kitten," said John, "and she looked very cunning in it. But she was not a ferocious beast at all, and I am not going to get Grimkie an orange for showing her to me ; would you ?"

"Did you promise him that you would ?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"On condition that he would show me a ferocious beast in an iron cage, I did," said John. "But he did not show me any such thing."

"I do not think you are under any obligation to give him an orange," said Mrs. Morelle, "for he did not perform his part of the contract as he meant you to understand it. He made out his case pretty well in the argument, however, for it is true that the cat is classed by naturalists among beasts of prey, and all beasts of prey are in a certain sense ferocious. Still he did not perform his part of his agreement, *as he meant you to understand it*; and that is the true rule. We are to perform our promises always as we mean the person that we make the promise to should understand them. So I think you are not *bound* to give him the orange. Still it might perhaps be a good plan for you to do it on your own account."

"How on my own account?" said John.
"What good would it do me to give him an orange?"

"Some people," said Mrs. Morelle, "are very particular about keeping up the credit of their promises. It is so very convenient to have everybody believe that when you promise anything, you *will certainly* keep your promise, because then everybody will always be ready to trust you. Some people are so anxious about this that they are in the first place very careful about making promises; but then, when they do make them, they are always very strict to fulfill them, even in cases where it is quite doubtful whether they are under any obligation to do it. I heard a man say once, 'If I promise a thing, I wish to keep my promise, no matter how good an excuse I may have in that particular case for not keeping it. The reason is because I wish people to believe that when I promise I shall certainly perform, and never be afraid that I may possibly come to them with some good excuse, instead of the performance.'"

"Well, mother," said John, "I think that is the best way for me to do."

"It is just as you please," said Mrs. Morelle.
"If you do not carry Grinkie his orange, he will say, I presume, 'Very well, I did not really

think he would. He was not bound to bring me one, for it was a sort of a trick I played him.' If, on the other hand, you do carry him one, he will be surprised, I suppose, and will say, 'John is the most honorable boy I ever knew. If he promises, he will do what he promises, whether or no.'

"Then, of course," continued Mrs. Morelle, "after this, you would be somewhat suspicious of Grimkie's good faith in keeping his engagements, and you would have to be somewhat on your guard not to be taken in by him; but he would have no suspicion of yours, but would trust you implicitly at all times, and on all occasions."

"I will get him his orange," said John. "I had rather do it than not."

Accordingly, the next morning, before the time came for the party to set out on their return up the river, John went out and bought an orange for Grimkie, and asked the shopman to wrap it up carefully for him in a paper. He also availed himself of the opportunity to buy three other oranges—one for his mother, one for Florence, and one for himself.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

I SUPPOSE that the Hudson River railroad is the *noisiest* railroad in the world. The reason is that it runs along close under the bank of the river, and for a large portion of the distance a way is cut for it in the bank in such a manner that on the side toward the land there is a perpendicular wall of rocks which more than doubles the natural noise of the locomotive and the train, by the thundering reverberations which are reflected from it.

The consequence is that in the summer time, when the windows of the cars are open, the passengers in the train are nearly stunned by the noise, and conversation is almost entirely impossible.

For this reason, and also for some others, Florence and John desired to return home by the steamboat, instead of going up as they came down, by the railroad, and their mother readily consented to this plan. The boat sailed at two o'clock. This gave them all the forenoon in New

York. The children spent one hour of this time in their room, writing an account of their journey down, and making the drawing of a seat under a tree in Union Square, which they saw from the windows of the hotel.

The party had a very pleasant passage up the river in the steamboat, and when they reached home they put all the parcels containing the tools and materials for the winter shop safe in one of the drawers of the closet. Here they were all to remain, in the original packages in which the shopmen had enveloped them, until the time should arrive for opening the shop.

The very next day the children set off with their mother to carry little Allan his rocking-boat. They went by the train. They left the train at the station nearest the house where Allan lived, and then they employed a man whom they found at the station to carry the rocking-boat to the house. Both Allan and his mother were greatly surprised and also extremely pleased to see the boat, and Allan found that by pushing with his feet a little as he bent backwards and forwards, he could make it go perfectly well.

The next volume of this series will give some particular account of GRIMKIE.

THE END.

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